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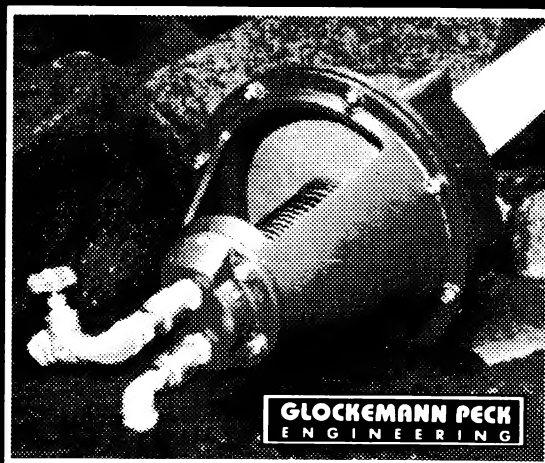
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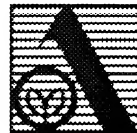
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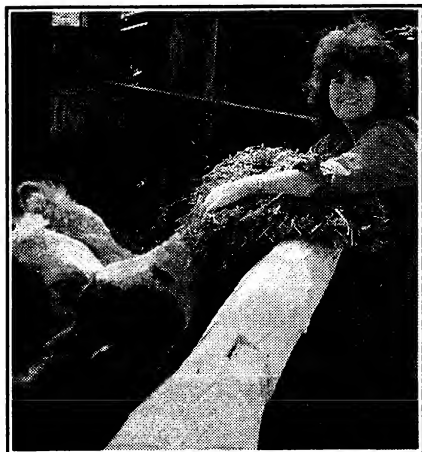
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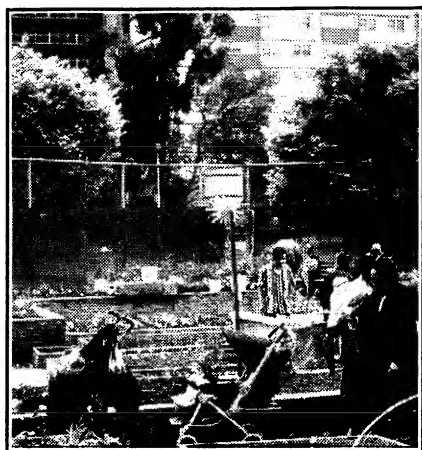
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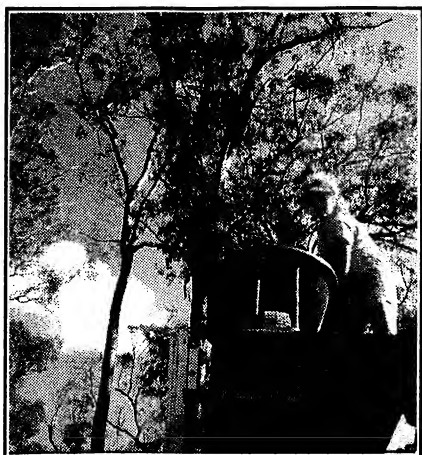
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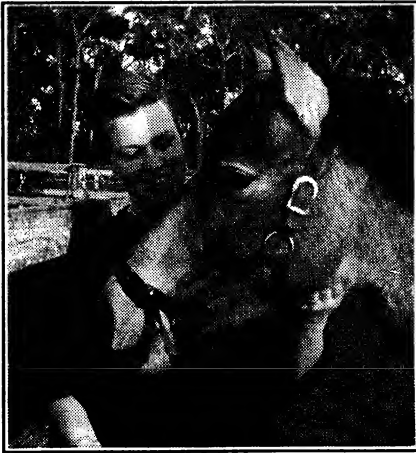
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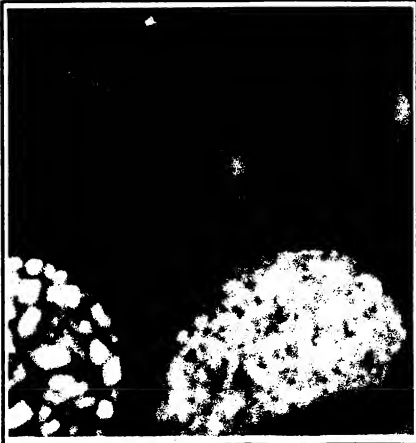
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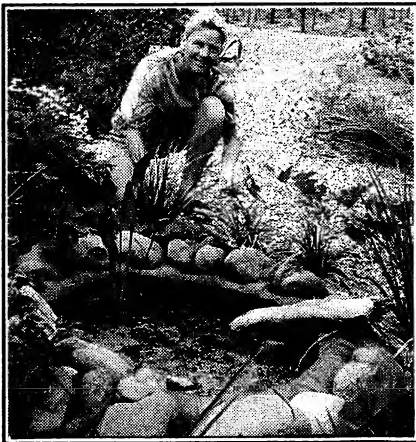
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COVER PHOTOS

Front Cover: Jade Woodhouse harvests a bumper corn crop on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland property she and husband Paul have created. Their organic produce is eagerly sought by locals and provides a welcome farm income. Read about their successful organic farm page 6. Photo by Rae Burrell, Accord Photographics, ph: 02-5478-8887.

Back Cover: Organic food may not always look this lush, but it is charged with nutrition and environmentally sustainable. Read how healthy it is for you on page 22. Photo Courtesy Organic Retailers & Growers Association, Australia.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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GUMNUT GOSSIP

by Megg Miller.

Returning to work after the Christmas break seemed less of an ordeal this year, with different individuals here expressing relief at being away from the pressures of serious partying or the temptation of holiday fare. The office looked forlorn after our absence, the rows of bright Chrissie cards being the only reminder of the mad scramble of December. We've enjoyed the assemblage of cards that have come in from readers; thank you all for your kind thoughts. One particular card deserves a special mention, sent in by Pauline and Alan Stewart. (Alan's unimitable article on 'Beer can Butterflies' was in No 135). The cover of their card featured a splendid collection of calling birds, French hens, turtle doves and the proverbial partridge in the pear tree, while inside a lone worried turkey commented, 'All I'm asking is that you consider the options'. Of course I loved the card and it will grow old on my noticeboard.

It's been a relief that production of this magazine has been free of the problems that made life so difficult during the outputting of the Dec/Jan issue. I can report there have been *no more nightmares* as the anonymous fax I mentioned last time promised. Most of our work has to be finished before we break up on Christmas Eve, making December totally chaotic. The resulting break, although much enjoyed, results in a sense of disassociation, as I found one night recently. Where had I put the photos for this magazine? Time was tight when I started searching in earnest, papers going left and right as panic increased. Finally, in desperation, I rang Mary, who was puzzled to hear from me at 8.30 in the evening. I blurted out my crime – no photos. 'Well,' she said, so nicely. 'They're on my table. You gave them to me for safekeeping before Christmas.' I hope this slip of memory was the result of festive excitement and not the precursor of something sinister. Not surprisingly, I had to wear some gentle jibes over this. Our only other little flurry involved a hiccup with some Grassifieds. Mary had closely checked a file of advertisements and knew they were all correct, but some gremlin prevented outputting on the paging system. Aware of the clock ticking by, Natalie decided it might be quicker to actually retype the pages concerned and personally took on the role. Nat's design work is fabulous, but, as with

many artistic people, her spelling isn't always, well, perfect. Usually typing is Vicki's domain and she is both fast and accurate. When the pages under discussion were outputted, Mary ran an eye over them, confident her earlier work had eliminated any errors. By luck or instinct, she later looked more closely, and almost became apoplectic. Mary restored by coffee, the pages were duly reproofed and corrected and we think, we've got them right again. Life, or should I be more direct and say, magazine production, always has an unpredictable element. You fix one problem and another pops up in its place. Luckily we've become philosophical and don't make mountains out of molehills.

Some GR people are amazing; really, really, amazing. We think you're all innovative and inspiring, but there are a few individuals just a wee bit more remarkable. There are three whose recycling accomplishments deserve an individual mention. Marjorie Bligh is known to you all for her articles on recycling ('Being Crafty is Thrifty' in No 135) and her *Commonsense Manual of Home Economics and Beyond*. This dear lady found the time to make and parcel up a box of wondrous articles for us all to enjoy. This is even more remarkable considering she isn't in perfect health herself and has spent much time at the bedside of her beloved husband. We were speechless at what Marjorie created from common throwaway objects and I can proudly say I'm now the owner of a covered coathanger, its 'jacket' being made from crocheted bread bags. Equally well known and extraordinary is Roberino whose regular projects feature in GR. His latest achievement is one of the best, a cheap reusable postage capsule. He used a plastic wrap tube with wine cask 'taps' for end-caps and it arrived in better condition than many conventional post tubes. Our final inventor of the trio is David Richardson who has designed a second life for packaged water containers as easy-to-carry substitutes for large jerry cans. His article will feature in a later issue, but briefly, it explains how to insert a valve top taken from mineral water or the like, and glue it in place with an epoxy product. David's 10 litre, homemade jerry cans are easy to carry and should be a boon to those wanting small containers for water.

I might not be able to see the desk top for coathangers and plastic bottles, but it's

terrific-people are working on reusing rubbish and prepared to share their ideas with everyone.

At the end of the month we'll be saying goodbye to Catherine who will be temporarily swapping her computer for a cradle. Her robust health and dedicated approach to work has us a trifle concerned it will be an office rather than birthing centre delivery. A veritable expert on publishing systems, she has been a great help to the business in her 18 months with us. We're sure she will breeze through all that's ahead and wish her, partner Ian, and the new bub, health and happiness. Jen, who retired some months ago to welcome her second tot into the world has a lovely girl, Angelica. Jen has been responsible for the Kid's Page for some time and we're hoping she will be able to continue when Angelica is more settled. Our congratulations to Jen and family.

Late last year I attended the annual Seed Savers gathering in Byron Bay, lack of space preventing a mention of it last issue. Quite a few GR readers were there and of course, Jude and Michel Fanton who have been the backbone of seed saving in Australia. Not only was it a friendly, fabulous weekend with formal and informal learning, but the gardens were exceptional and displayed many varieties discussed in GR that are unknown down south. Also present was a GR contributor of many issues ago, Pauline Williams, a person I'd shared many letters with, but not previously met. Paula, as she is now known, has organised the library for seed savers and helps out in many ways. If you get a chance to attend a function like the gathering, or even a gardening or small farms field day, go. You'll learn lots, widen your network and make new friends.

I'm finishing this off chewing lollies, so if words run together you'll know why. Roger, who handles our mail now, runs a sub-agency-cum-general store and brought us all a bag of lollies as a fun gesture. The rattle of bags is quite deafening as we all scrummage amongst the contents. Last week Vicki turned up on her day off with a large smile and a basket of warm muffins. They lifted the stress like magic. You read and hear lots about the importance of the big picture, the sweeping gesture or action. Vicki and Roger's thoughtful gestures are proof that the little things in life are important too. Often we just need to be reminded.

A FULLER BASKET SIMPLY NATURAL ORGANIC FARM

by Tara Andre, Eudlo, Qld.

Need a bit of extra income to help finance your GR lifestyle? Consider supplying neighbours with excess fruit and vegies from a roadside stall. Jade and Paul Woodhouse have found this type of enterprise is not only rewarding, it also helps to raise people's awareness about health and the environment.

For residents at Eudlo, on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland, Jade and Paul Woodhouse's roadside stall is a big plus. Not only are the vegetables fresh, the food is grown by sustainable and ecological methods. Jade is an example of how organic eating and living can restore and maintain health. She became seriously ill in Dec '95 and switched to a vegan diet using store-bought organic food. Noticing a marked improvement in health, the couple then decided to grow their own. After purchasing a two-acre block in early '97 they began to prepare a garden using permaculture principles. Energetic and enthusiastic, the Woodhouses's spent long hours nurturing the soil by adding large quantities of hay, organic compost, Natra Kelp,

worm castings and lucerne. Their garden responded and was soon producing more than they needed.

To help pay for garden expenses the excess was placed in a barrow near the road and an honor system of payment put in place. This arrangement was so successful they made a polypipe arched structure, its roof thatched with palm fronds and tea tree branches. Customers and produce continued to expand and their carport is now utilised as a stall which is opened two days each week. From humble beginnings, Jade and Paul now offer an amazing variety of around 40 herbs and vegetables.

A visit to the stall is an experience in itself. To ensure vegetables are always fresh and crisp they are often picked

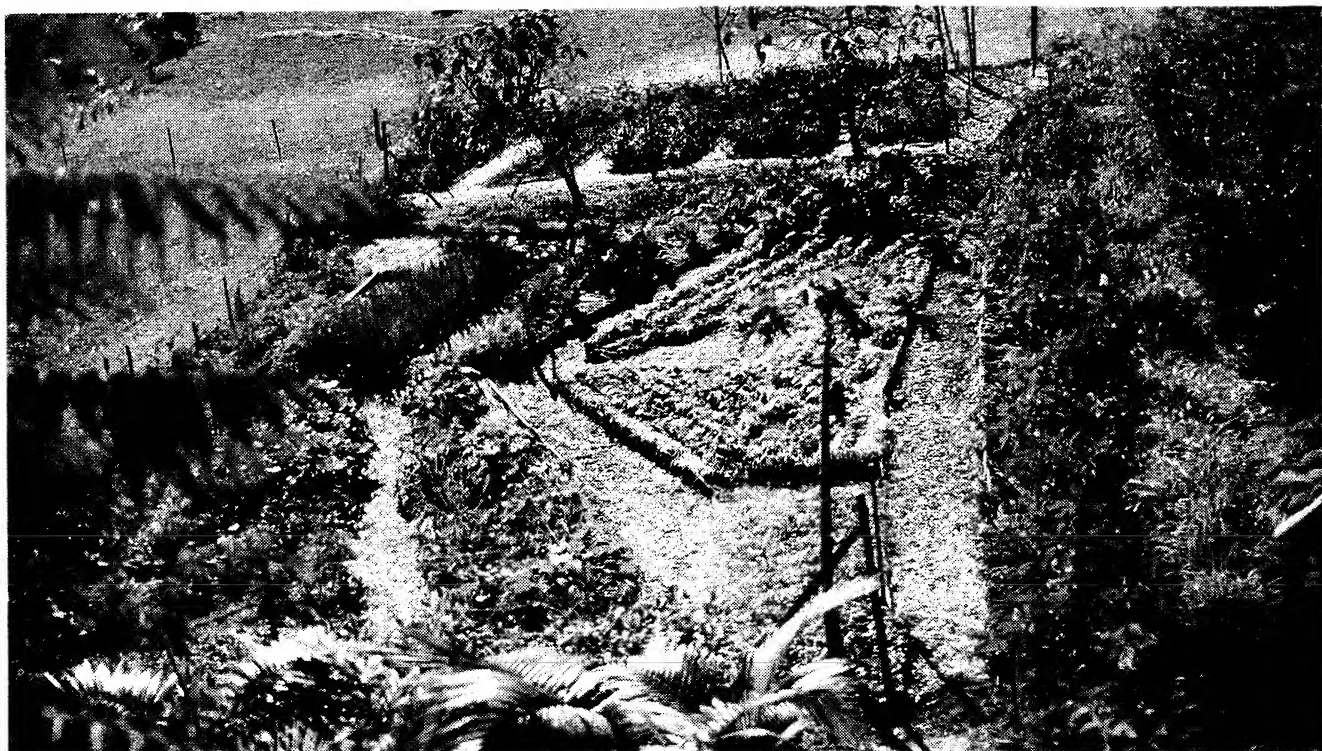
from the garden and brought straight up to the stall as items sell out. The couple are a wealth of information and freely share hints with customers wishing to start their own edible gardens.

Jade admits to having a passion for the soil itself. She is constantly feeding it with green manures, composted animal manure, and liquid comfrey, so now a handful of soil carries hundreds of fat, healthy earthworms. At one stage Paul was asking friends, 'How many worms are too many?' He was actually worried there may not be enough soil left to sustain healthy plants.

A walk around the farm is a gardener's dream and proof that permaculture can be attractive as well as functional. The vegie garden combines frog ponds,

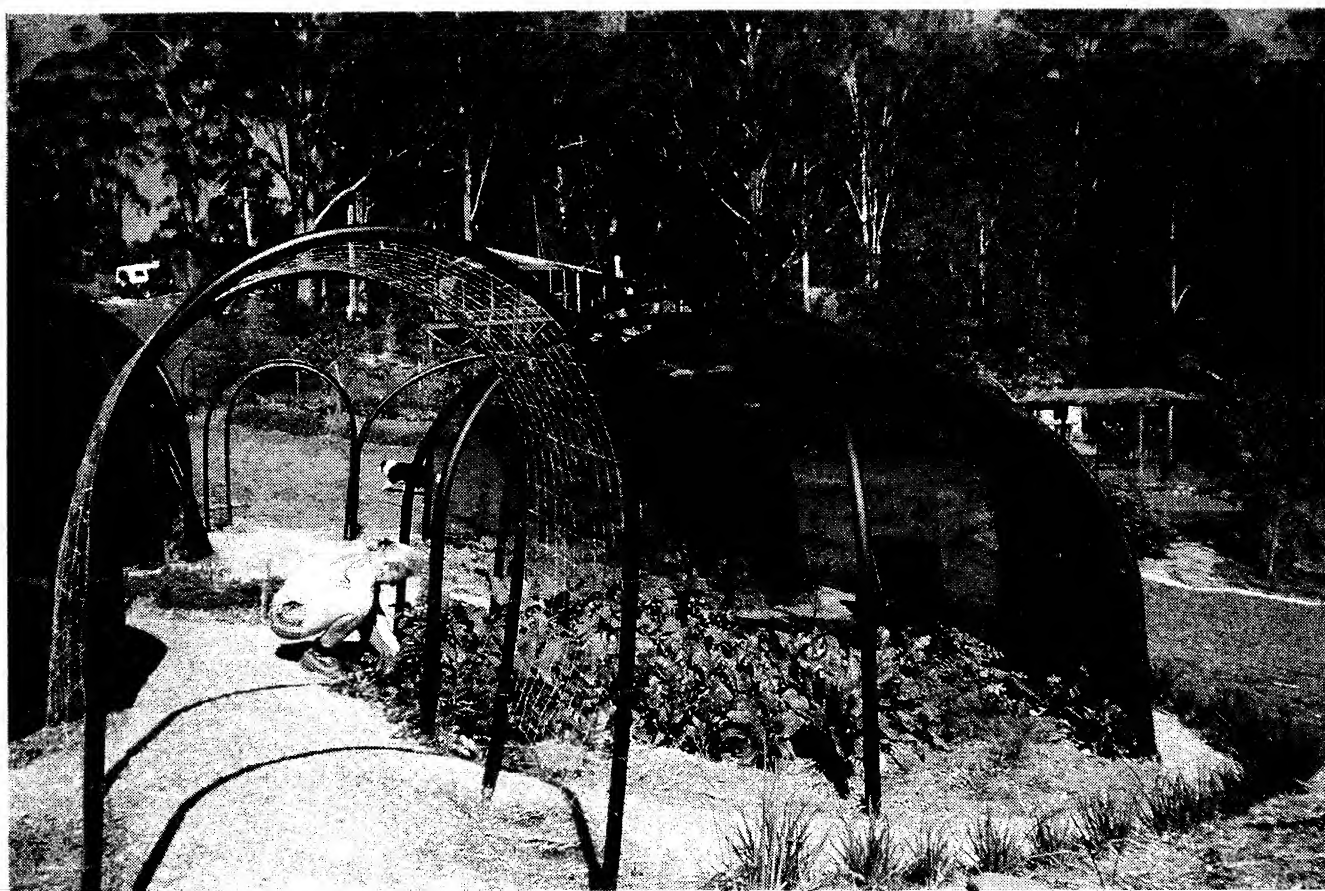


A vegan, organic food diet improved Jade's health to such an extent that she and Paul decided to buy a property and grow their own. From that small beginning has developed a successful roadside stall.



Above: The permaculture-designed vegie garden has proven to be both productive and aesthetically pleasing.

Below: Polypipe structures are used for a variety of purposes, including shadehouses, trellis-covered walkways, and the roadside stall itself.



native-bird-attracting areas, chook tractors, a seed-raising polyshade tunnel, herb spirals, ying and yang herb gardens, vertical growing areas, archways for vines, and shade-enhancing polypipe structures.

A carefully planned citrus orchard allows filtered air flow through to the house and includes an understorey of cassava, potatoes, broad beans, leeks and garlic. 'Scully' scarecrow watches over this area surrounded by pinto peanut which is a green manure ground cover.

Ducks and geese forage amongst the forest of stone fruit trees which are companion planted with ginger, turmeric, cardamom, arrowroot, bananas and palms. This area has been especially created to offer a cooler microclimate. Being able to successfully grow stone fruit in the subtropics is a feat in itself. Jade says that nothing is more pleasing than to see the ducks nestled in the shade of the taro and Tahitian spinach. The all-important annual garden, where most produce is grown, takes up around one-third of their system.

Customer support and loyalty is strong. Nathan, 17, a regular visitor to the stall, changed his eating habits after he became accustomed to the taste of fresh, organic tucker. 'I can't eat take-away anymore,' he said. 'I can taste chemicals immediately and feel a lack of vitality afterwards.' It is not only Nathan who has benefited from the couple's efforts. 'We notice the change in people's health and attitude soon after they switch to our produce,' Jade said.

Although most food sold from the stall is grown on the property, the couple buy in some staples such as organic potatoes and carrots. Their intention, however, is to become self-sufficient in all fresh supplies for the stall and them-

selves as well. Being vegan and eating mostly raw vegetables, they have almost achieved that goal.

They admit the farm is a work of love. They start at 5am and don't stop till dark and their only outings are visits to the shops. The annual gardens will always be demanding, but eventually all they'll have to do is maintenance work to the rest of the garden and then they'll have more free time.

They are currently designing and implementing a food forest which will give them long-term income. This area will incorporate swales, ponds, and lots of nutrient-building materials for bringing back fertility into the old, tired, neglected soil. Their small environmentally friendly house (minimal impact to the property) will need to be extended to accommodate the expanding business. Paul still works outside the farm on a casual basis to supplement their income.

Their organic farm is a visual delight and it is difficult to believe they have achieved so much in just two years. Jade says, 'It is a busy life, yet extremely bountiful. We are truly living our dream'.

Jade and Paul would like to see more road stalls being set up by GR folk. 'It's a great way to pay for garden expenses. During our farm's development all money made from the store has helped to pay for the next area of development on the property. Anyone contemplating a stall should check with their council first though.

'By setting up a roadside stall you have an opportunity to sell living food to locals, thus generating improved health and at the same time helping to regenerate a sense of community. The environment can be helped by cutting out the retail sector which reduces the need for transportation. Local produce

for locals means less energy is required, with minimal impact on the environment. It's logical. While providing for your neighbours you can also help to educate them about possible edible gardens at home. They can also try new and different vegetables. We have found that over a period of time their baskets get fuller with a wider range of vegies and fruit. Eating fresh, flavoursome, clean food can change long-term dietary habits for the better.'

Jade and Paul's farm is at 413 Highlands Rd, Eudlo 4554. The stall is open Friday from 1pm to dark and Sunday 8am-12 noon or till sold out. Tours of the farm will be available throughout the year with open and education days in the future. Jade also hopes to run classes on organic vegetable growing, food growing for the family and complete permaculture courses. They welcome enquiries from people wishing to learn how to grow real food and organic growers using permaculture methods wishing to produce an income.



GAS CYLINDERS

Gas cylinders have a ten-year life and a date stamp that appears on all cylinders can determine their age. It is recommended that cylinders over this age be replaced or taken to a Gas Cylinder Test Station for retesting.

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ANIMAL LESSONS

by Helen Garretty, Yallourn North, Vic.

As well as teaching our animals behaviours we find acceptable or convenient, we can learn from them. Observe their innate behaviour and use it to make your management easier. Helen Garretty gives us some tips to begin with.

Success with any animal depends upon accepting its genetic make-up which includes innate behaviour some of which you can employ to your advantage with skillful training.

GRAZING

Cattle, sheep, goats and alpacas are essentially nomadic animals, which wander large areas to obtain the best food available. Thus, when released into a new paddock, they immediately wander over the whole paddock picking out the best feed, then select others in priority order. The result is usually that some vegetation does not get eaten at all, except in lean times. Combine different species, or use strip grazing, to provide constant fresh green tips. If you have sufficient funds, subdivide your property into small paddocks.

HERD AND FLOCK BEHAVIOUR

Cattle, goats and sheep naturally live in groups. They will stay with their group and it is often difficult to separate one animal. They will huddle together for safety. This behaviour has its advantages – get one to head for the gate and the rest will follow. If it is necessary to treat one animal, get a group into the stockyard. If you want to round them up, use their group mentality to encourage them to stick together, along the fence and through the gate. Have gates at the corners of the paddock to make it easier.

Like humans, cattle, sheep and goats pick on an animal that is different. I had eight cows, only one of which was pregnant. The other seven rejected her from the group, but she kept trying to rejoin them.

CONTROL

Routine is a powerful aid in the management of animals. They are all genetically geared to do the same things each day, at roughly the same times, according to their view of the planet's movement. Routine can be a nuisance



Goats are herd animals so use this innate characteristic to assist your management.

at times, but for the most part it is an enormous advantage. Dairy herds find their own way to the milking shed and back to the paddock. Dogs and cats appear at mealtime.

You can get to know individual temperaments and behaviour, think ahead, anticipate, and therefore keep control. One of my small herd of cows always refused to go into the stockyard. So I made sure she was in the middle of the group, so she had little choice.

Stand quietly with your sheep, just close enough to get them to move, and then move with them. If they are chased, they will run (some breeds, like goats, will turn and challenge). My ewes would turn and attack my young Maremma, but if the dog sat down, they backed away. I have used that observation to boost the dog's training.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

If your employer calls you into the

office and reprimands you for something you did last week, you are usually able to recall the event and connect the reprimand with it. Our farm animals cannot perform that feat. Cause and effect must be instantaneous – as with the electric fence.

The average attention span of dogs is about 5 to 10 seconds. Whenever my dog is doing something that could be useful to me, I call encouragement. For example, with a new dog, whenever it sits down, I say 'Sit! beautiful boy/girl!', in a praising voice. If my young Maremma is walking quietly amongst the sheep, I call out 'beautiful boy'. Even with cattle and sheep this strategy has an effect, over time. They get to know the different tones of voice.

Animals have limited ability to apply reason over instinct, especially if food is a factor in the equation. For dogs, biting is an innate response to a threat. If you get bitten, it is because you failed to foresee that a particular event or situation would cause that response. With some dogs (and some breeds) constant vigilance is required. You should know the extent and breadth of your dog's tolerance of threat and control its environment accordingly.

If you shout and growl at your dog, it will shout and growl as well – not necessarily at the same time. I remember well a dog (not mine) that used to rush out the gate and threaten with snarls every passerby. One day it was me. The owner rushed out, grabbed the dog, shouted at it, took it round the back of the house (by which time the dog had completely forgotten that it had snarled at me), and I heard yelping. I was horrified, but not at all surprised – it explained the dog's behaviour.

One of my dogs was delighted to find that she could see through the brand new flyscreen door. She wanted to come inside, so she swiped the door with her paw. I grabbed a small plastic water-spray pack, filled it, and waited

in hiding. Sure enough, another swipe at the wire. I shot out, pressed, and woosh! She got a fine spray over her face and leapt back with a loud yelp of astonishment. The door was never touched again, nor did she ever realize that I had caused the effect.

PLAYFULNESS

Respond to your dog's playful appeals. They are reminders that now is the only moment you have. One of my Chows loves to run away when I want him to go through the gate at the side of the house. He stands at a distance and waves his teeth at me. No good getting angry. I laugh, wander up and give him a big hug, then he runs through the gate obediently.

If you have a quite small herd of cattle and they get to know you, they will play up and let you chase them all over the paddock a couple of times, then they will suddenly do what they knew you wanted, and go through the gate. Don't scream at them. Let them have their play (though it can be annoying if they pug up the ground, or flatten all your beautiful hay paddock).

LEADER AND BENEFACTOR

Animals are genetically geared to watch for predators, especially if they have young. Unless you train them otherwise, they see you as a threat, not a benefactor. With grazing animals there is usually not an identified leader; the whole group acts together. They are



Handle sheep quietly, a frenzied charge around the paddock with sheep scattering everywhere is not in anyone's interest.

fearful of being cornered, with no escape, and will run straight through you. Wild dogs have a pack leader who ensures feed and defence.

It is your job to become a good leader and benefactor. Every animal on your property should see you as the boss. The boss provides food and shelter, hands out favours, and has a relationship with every animal. You, as the leader of the dogs, should have sufficient peaceful control to determine the pecking order (but keep in mind that under stress both males and females will fight each other even if they are desexed). If you have several different species or breeds, you need to know their individual characteristics – for example, my Maremma automatically assumes that he is the pack herder, and that everyone else, dog, sheep, cow, or whatever, should obey him as my delegate. If one is a bit slow responding to my command, he will start barking furiously.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

A significant proportion of the human race denies that it is essentially an animal species. This is most unfortunate, because they fail to perceive a wonderful array of animal characteristics which complement our intellect to give us a unique place in the planet's life. If you own dogs, cattle, sheep, or indeed any animal, you have to accept your own animality in order to understand their responses to you. They don't know about your superior intellect, your TV, music, or your job. They see you as the all-powerful animal which routinely leaves the territory and comes back, provides food and disciplines them. If you accept yourself as an animal, you will enjoy, manage and benefit from your farm companions, and enjoy your own self, far more than anyone who vehemently denies that they belong to the animal kingdom.



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NO REGRETS

by Gwen Deem, Yerra, Qld.

My husband and I were rapidly approaching the ripe old age of fifty when we decided to sell our comfortable city home with the wonderful river views, and head for the bush. Of course, everyone thought we'd gone totally mad.

'Mum's gone troppo,' became my grownup children's favourite phrase, and our city friends were in total sympathy thinking we had indeed lost our marbles. 'How will Gwen get along with the snakes?', a workmate of my husband's asked as soon as he heard we were moving to Yerra in southern Queensland. Yerra is the brown snake capital of Queensland.

Well, three years have passed since then, and I'm beginning to think there's truth in his statement. Particularly after reaching into our letter box and almost grasping hold of a large snake that was sleeping blissfully alongside the bread, then finding another wriggling across the kitchen floor the very next day. But, Richard's mate is the only one that's come within coo-ee of being right, and our city friends are starting to think that maybe we're not so mad after all.

Because who wouldn't want to wake up to the sound of kookaburras laughing, as dawn breaks over the mountains we view from our bedroom window? Who would want to miss the beautiful blue-faced honeyeaters darting in and out of the grevillea blossoms and banana flowers in their constant search for nectar? I think you'd be mad not to experience a sudden surge of delight, watching the yellow-tailed black cockatoos squabbling over the nuts in our little stand of pine trees. And how could you not want to see the pink and grey feathered flocks of cheeky galahs flying overhead, or the lopsided gait and clumsy landing of the coucal pheasant after a reluctant flight?

Do these same friends have a grey kangaroo who hops in to visit them and share a piece of cake, or a bearded dragon lizard eating the grubs in their gardens? And speaking of gar-



Enjoyment of the simple wonders of the natural world ensures Gwen Deem and her husband do not regret leaving their comfortable city lifestyle.

dens, do their trees in the city have big, black mulberries dripping from the branches, and dozens of delicious, green avocados just waiting to be picked? Do these city dwellers see jars of golden honey from their own bee hives when they open their pantry doors? I doubt they'll ever know the satisfaction of seeing five-hundred tiny saplings turn into an orchard of sturdy, grey-leaved olive trees.

I can't help but wonder if they would feel the same thrill that I experience each time the wet nose of a little calf nuzzles my hand after it's drained the last drop of milk from my bucket, or while watching not one but 12 tiny pink piglets squirming their way into the world. I think it's sad that they've never even felt a warm, brown egg that's just been laid on a bed of hay, or watched the sugar cane being fired up ready for harvest.

'But what about entertainment?', they ask.

'Well,' I reply, 'What could be more entertaining than lighting up the huge bonfire you've built, and settling back to watch it roar into life, as you sit trying to spot a shooting star amongst the millions in the clear night sky overhead, and waiting for the flames to die down just enough to pop freshly dug, foil-wrapped potatoes into the hot embers?'

Or what better way to spend a relaxing afternoon than taking a picnic lunch down to a grassy bank under a tall, lemon-scented gum tree by the dam, listening to the happy warblings of a magpie, as you watch the long-legged water hens wade amongst the mauve waterlilies, while gossamer-winged dragonflies hover overhead.

'No,' we tell our visiting friends, whose faces have taken on a look of total awe as they watch a huge crimson sun turn the twilight sky into an artist's palette of blazing colour as it slowly sinks. 'We have no regrets. Do you?'

ANYONE FOR TEA?

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen Buddhism, once, during a profound state of meditation, inadvertently fell into a deep sleep. Upon awakening he was so disgusted with his lack of self-control that he cut off his eyelids. Legend has it that his eyelids, after falling to the earth, grew into the first tea plants.

Tea is an aromatic stimulant, and a preventative of sleep. The caffeine content is around two to three times that of coffee!

It is widely accepted that the Chinese introduced tea to the world, and some authorities would have it that tea drinking in China can be traced back to the second millennium BC, though documentary evidence shows that it only achieved widespread use in that country around the seventh century AD.

The word 'tea', although mostly used to refer to the common hot or cold, drink served in most Australia households and brewed from the plant



Camellia sinensis, is also used to describe the decoction of various herbs and plants. However, a word of caution! Although most plants and herbs are 'tea-able', not all 'teas' are drinkable!

'Herbal teas' are not always derived from herbs, but can come from the roots, bark, leaves, and seeds of shrubs, vines, and trees (and even some species of fungi). Many herbs are not recommended for drinking because of potential adverse effects. Some of those thought doubtful are shave grass, sassafras, yellow dock, comfrey, and pennyroyal.

The common tea made from *C. sinensis* can also be used as polish on varnished timber as well as a glass and

mirror cleaner. In days gone by it was also used as a timber stain for new wooden floors.

Modern research reveals that house dust contains tiny dust mites which are thought to aggravate conditions such as asthma, eczema, and hay fever. Research also appears to indicate that sprinkling the floor with cold tea prevents reactions to the mites' allergens. It seems that the tannic acid in tea neutralises these allergens. Besides, tea (and its leaves) when finely sprinkled on the floor, dampens and cakes the dust, preventing clouds of it swirling around the room. After sweeping, it leaves a pleasant smell in the room.

The leaves of the humble cabbage can be crushed and steeped in boiling water and the 'tea' used as gargle or as an ointment. As a salve, it is used for a wide range of ailments including, arthritis, burns, cuts, gout, insect bites, muscular pain, and rheumatism.

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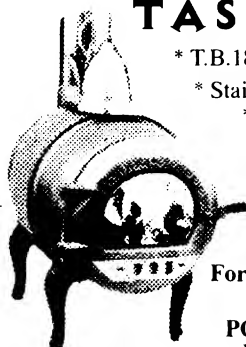
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MAKE YOUR OWN SAUSAGES

PART III: FILLING THE CASINGS

by Lucy Daugalis, Daw Park, SA.

In my first two articles I wrote about essential preparatory knowledge, types of meat suitable for sausage making and use of additives, including spices. Now, at last, we get to preparing the casings and making the actual sausages.

CASINGS

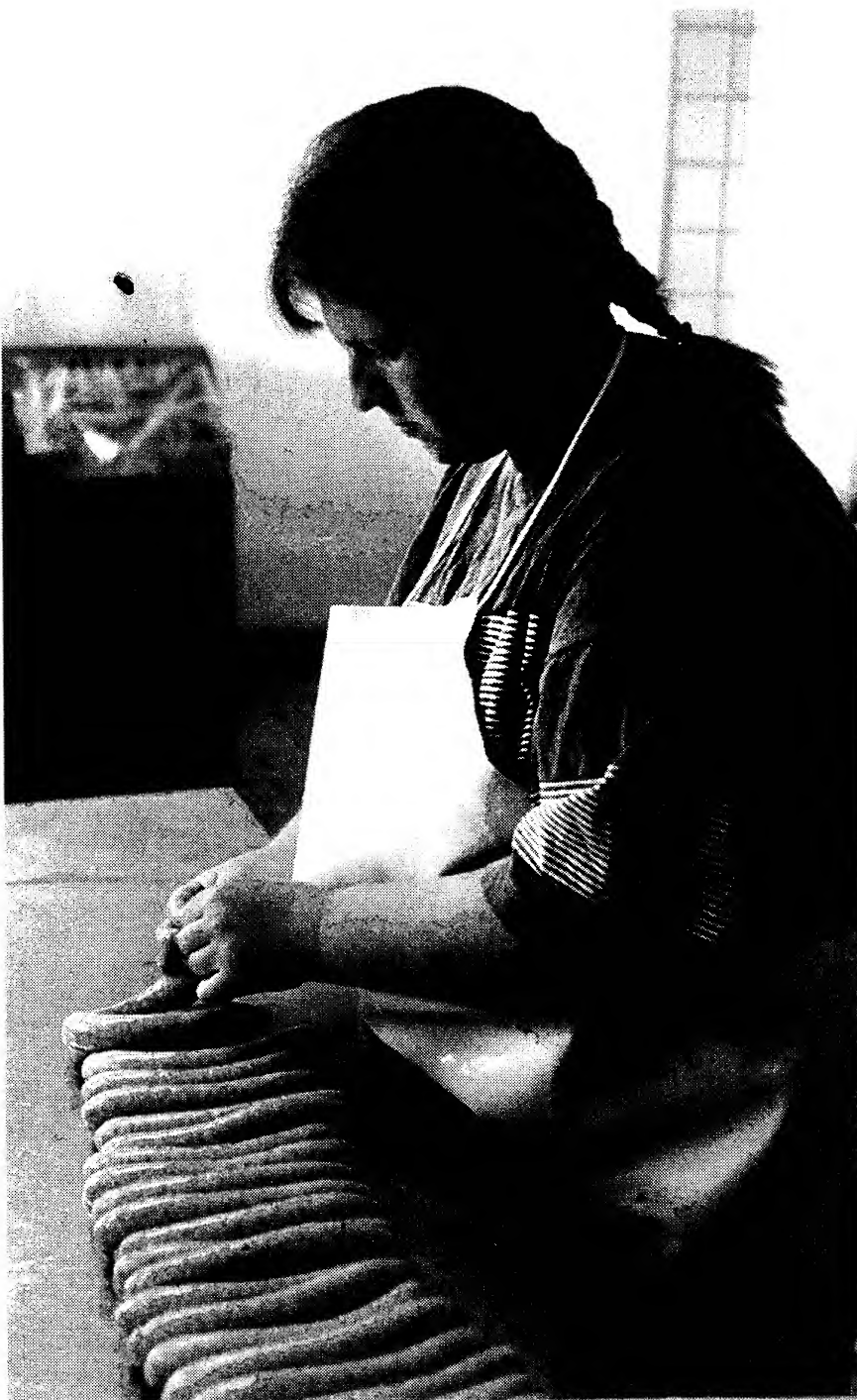
When cutting up an animal, the intestines should be placed in cold water to cool them down quickly. The quicker they are cleaned, the stronger they are.

First, all the fat should be removed, from the intestines. It is not only unnecessary, but even harmful when the casings are used for making sausages. The fat coats the casings and prevents the smoke from penetrating the interior of the sausage. Besides, these fats spoil very quickly, through the influence of air and bacteria, and get an acrid taste which, in time, can penetrate the sausage.

This job should be done carefully and as hygienically as possible, because any remnants of excreta can produce harmful, sausage-spoiling bacteria. After taking off the fat, the excreta should be removed, and the insides of the casings washed in warm water two to three times. Then they are turned inside out, washed several times in warm water, and well rubbed with salt, until the slimy coating disappears. The slime from the thin casings is shaved off with the back of a knife, or by pulling it between two tightly held sticks. After shaving, they are again rinsed two to three times in clean water. During the final rinse it is useful to incorporate a little alum or permanganate of potash to make a weak pink-coloured solution. Then they are placed in clean, cold water.

Before using them for sausages, the casings should be squeezed to get the water out and hung out to dry, for the water to run off. There should be as little water as possible left in the casings.

If the casings are to be kept longer, they should be soaked in medium salty water which should be changed every two to three weeks. In this way, in win-



The process of filling the casings must be carried out with absolute cleanliness to avoid contamination with harmful bacteria.



ter (which in Europe is considerably colder) they can be kept for quite a long time.

For the making of long-keeping sausage, the most suitable are the straight intestines of cattle. They are thick and strong, therefore the meat can be packed tightly, not leaving any spaces. Also, the longer-kept thick sausages do not dry out so much. Pigs' thick, straight intestines are less suitable because they are more greasy and not as strong.

Casings can also be bought already cleaned.

MAKING THE SAUSAGES

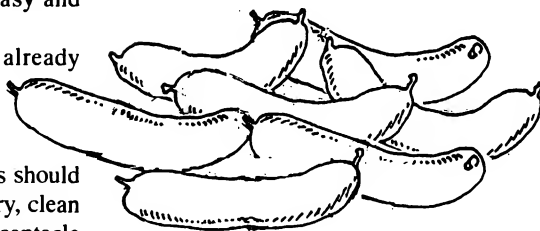
The meat to be used for sausages should be taken into a cold ($3 - 5^{\circ}\text{C}$), dry, clean room and placed into a clean receptacle in thin layers, or upon a clean board or table. The receptacle, board or table upon which the meat is to be placed should be well washed with detergent, then rinsed with clean water and dried. Care should be taken that the meat does not come into contact with the water (through dishes or wet hands), because the meat could be contaminated with bacteria that could spoil the sausages. Just slaughtered, healthy animal meat is quite clean and has no spoilage-creating starters. The meat is only contaminated through the surroundings: by air, unclean dishes, hands or clothing.

The meat should be kept in the cool room for one to two days. During that time it cools down and dries out somewhat. It is better not to keep entering the room during these days, not to raise any dust, nor work with flour, nor keep anything of a strong-smelling nature (kerosene, petrol etc).

If the front legs (hams) of the animal are to be used for the sausages, they should be immediately skinned, the bones taken out and meat cut into smaller pieces. Any pieces of fat in between the muscles should be taken out because they do not replace the hard, white bacon, but only worsen the sausage.

When cutting up a pig, there are usually quite a number of smaller pieces of muscle which should be separated: those that are suitable for dry sausages and those which are not, from which sausages for short-term use should be made. For the latter, small, tender muscles, which were near the inner organs (such as the lungs), or bleeding, dark red meat should be used.

The larger, still warm, pieces should not be placed in thick layers on each other, because the meat will not cool down for a longer time. The same thing happens when the surface of the meat, in a too-cold room, freezes, while the interior has not had the chance to cool down. This should be kept in mind also in cases where meat, which has not yet cooled down, needs to be taken somewhere else or transported in boxes.



If wishing to produce first-class sausages, one should not skimp on the best quality bacon. This is usually bacon from the back of the animal (near the spine). Bacon from ham can be used for some sorts of sausages, and the bacon from the underbelly is only suitable for soft sausages for short-term use.

Bacon, like the muscle meat, should be left in the same room, to cool down and harden. Then it is cut into pieces of one centimetre length, one centimetre width and half a centimetre thickness, and again placed in the coolroom (for best results at $5 - 6^{\circ}\text{C}$), in order to harden some more.

In the meantime, the muscle meat should be ground, and the spices prepared. Pork should be ground through a wider-spaced grinder attachment (hole size 13 mm) and beef through a finer one (4 to 5 mm.)

Salt and spices are put into the sausage meat according to the weight of the prepared meat. Thus the sausage is salted as much as is needed – not too much and not too little (see my article in GR 136).

After mixing the ground meat and chopped bacon, salt and spices are added and the prepared mixture worked over with the hands, so that the meat and bacon are evenly distributed. The ground meat does not need to be pressed down, because the meat for sausage should not be coated in fat. Only the meat that is used for short-term sausages can be punched down. It is wrong to think that unless the meat is pressed down, the sausage will be uneven and crumbly when cut. This depends not on the pressing down, but on the mistakes

made during the making of the sausages (to be covered next time).

The meat prepared for sausages should be formed into a loaf and held in a cool place 12 to 24 hours. Then it is filled into the casings. For this job one needs concentration and knowledge. The meat should be forced in such a way that a lot of air doesn't get into the casings with it and create air bubbles which obstruct the forcing of the meat. Such spaces can easily become mouldy, the fat disintegrates and the sausages develop an acrid taste. If the sausage is ground through a meat grinder (no 8 or no 10), the pieces of meat put into the casings should be the size of a fist and one should be careful to keep the grinder always full. It would be even better to use special grinders for this purpose, by which this job is done better.

The thick beef intestines, after examining them to make sure they are not torn somewhere, are cut into equal lengths (40 cm is the best). If they are fresh and the fat has been well cleaned off, they are turned inside out, so that the outer, greasy side becomes the inner. If the casings are older and have small bits of fat which are hard to take off, or are changed in colour, it is necessary that this side of the casings should remain outside. Also, when using such casings, they should be washed well and dipped in a weak permanganate of potash solution and then washed in cold water.

The meat should be filled into the casings as firmly as possible. This depends upon the strength of the casings as well as on the force used in filling. The machine should be turned slowly and very evenly. Another person should hold the sausage being filled, carefully watching its expansion and firmness. If the sausage is bent or wrinkled, it is necessary to be very careful and choose a suitable direction, so that it does not burst.

If the casing bursts during filling, meat should be carefully taken out and placed on a clean, dry tea towel. It is best not to mix it with the other meat meant for sausages. After finishing the job, the meat collected from burst casings should be dried off with a clean cloth, and a separate sausage made from it.

The sausages should be examined and, if any air bubbles are noticed, they should be pricked with a needle.

Next time: drying and smoking the sausage.

OLD TIME HINTS AND REMEDIES

by Donald Young, Burnett Downs, Qld.

Many cost reducing ideas still exist in and around the home, even in these days of canned food and drinks, packets of soap powder and plastic containers of just about everything. Our grandparents managed to keep floors clean, make their own soap, keep themselves and children neat and tidy, and had their own remedies and recipes. Here are just a few of those old hints. Some of the ingredients mentioned may not be readily available any longer. Try asking at chemist shops or chemical suppliers. One drachm is equal to an eighth of a fluid ounce (approximately 4 ml) and a grain was based on the average weight of a grain of wheat - 0.0648 g.

CLEANING

Cleaning Wool

Wool-lined boots or wool car rugs etc can be cleaned by sprinkling with camphorated chalk or very finely powdered starch. Leave for a day or two, then shake out the powder (or vacuum it out).

Shirt Collars

Collars will not absorb oil or grime when worn if talcum powder is put on them before and after ironing.

Jug Cleaner

To clean a dirty electric jug, slice a lemon, fill the jug with cold water, put in the lemon and boil.

Removing Burnt Jam from Saucepans

Put the saucepan (or oven slide) on an ant heap or ant trail. The ants will carry away every morsel.

Cleaning Silver

Add one teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda and one teaspoon of salt to one litre of water. Boil the water, making sure the silver objects are under water, for two or three minutes. The tarnish will adhere to the aluminium saucepan (always use an aluminium pan), so clean the saucepan afterwards.

Wallpaper

To remove grease spots from wallpaper mix white spirit and fuller's earth. Brush the mixture over the area, let it dry out and repeat. When the grease (or crayon

etc) has disappeared, brush off the remains with fuller's earth.

Brass Polish

Mix two tablespoons of powdered bath brick, three tablespoons of whitening, two of soft soap, six tablespoons of water and heat till soap is dissolved. Bottle, and add six tablespoons of turpentine.

Furniture Cleaner

One part linseed oil, one part white vinegar, one part turpentine, one-quarter part methylated spirits. Seal in a bottle. Polish with a soft cloth.

Mirror Cleaner

Mix 140 ml of methylated spirits, 140 ml of household ammonia and 285 ml of water. Keep in a well corked bottle.

Window Cleaner

Quarter-cup of vinegar, a teaspoon of ammonia, two litres of water.

Cleaning Copper

Use a paste made of 30 mg iron oxide, 85 g pumice powder and enough oleic acid to make a dough. Use a soft cotton pad to apply it.

Removing Mildew

Mix salt, starch and lemon juice, work into a paste, and apply to both sides of the fabric. Leave the article in the sun till mildew disappears, then wash in the usual way.

Cleaning Bricks

To remove paint and stains from brickwork, mix one part of muriatic acid with nine parts water and scrub the bricks with this mixture.

Brightening

Brass

Mix vinegar and salt and rub with a wet rag.

Cleaning Inside an Enamel Teapot

Use hot strong blue water (made with a blue bag).

Rubber Mildew

To clean mildew from rubber (around refrigerator doors etc) dissolve one denture cleansing tablet (or a teaspoon of the powder) in a cup of hot water, and wash over the rubber.

PERSONAL CARE

Age Spots

To treat brown age spots on the backs of hands, mix 30 ml of glycerine, 30 ml of pure alcohol (or vodka), 120 ml of pure honey and seven drops of ambergris. Bottle, and apply morning and night. Or mix 30 ml lemon juice, quarter-teaspoon of powdered borax and half-teaspoon of sugar. Bottle, let stand for several days. Apply after washing hands.

Face Pack

Mix egg white with a small amount of astringent. Pat on the face until skin is covered. Allow to dry, then wash off.

Face Freshener

Mix equal parts of witch hazel and rose-water. Or, mix 90 g of rolled oats, the juice of one and a half lemons and small amount of witch hazel.

Hair Care

Mix one part lemon juice with two parts bay rum. Rub into blonde hair to give good colour.

Hair Colour

To give colour to greying hair, mix quarter-cup of strong coffee, and one teaspoon of shampoo. Apply after washing, leave a few minutes, then give hair a quick rinse.

Cure for Drunkenness

Sulphate of iron (5 grains), magnesia (10 g), peppermint water (11 drachms), spirits of nutmeg (1 drachm). Dose 1 teaspoon in a wineglass of water (highly recommended).



FASCINATING FOOD

Soaking Greens

Add lemon juice to the water to draw out insects.

Boiling Corn Beef

Add quarter-cup of vinegar and four tablespoons of treacle to the water, to make it juicy and give the meat a good colour.

Grilling Chops

Place in a colander first, pour boiling water over them. This seals in the flavour.

Pan-Fried Snake

(from the Aboriginal and Island Affairs Department, Cooktown)



First, cut off the head. Skin, chop into pieces, wipe pieces dry, add to a pan rubbed with garlic. Melt two tablespoons of butter in the pan, saute some diced onion, add the snake pieces with parsley, thyme, bayleaf, cloves, pepper and salt, and cook for a few minutes. Add stock and claret in equal parts, cover and boil for 20 minutes. When tender, remove snake pieces and strain the liquor.

It could be improved by thickening with arrowroot, some diced onion, half a lemon, 1 teaspoon of mushroom cat-sup, 15 g anchovy butter, brown colouring and more salt and pepper. Boil till thick, add a few button mushrooms, warmed in their own liquor. Garnish with onion and mushrooms after pouring snake in the dish.

Tasty Kangaroo

Cut some steaks and fry golden brown with two onions and two large tomatoes. Remove meat, shake in a little flour, salt and pepper. Add hot water freely, stir well. Put the meat, tomato and onion back on heat and simmer about two hours.

Wallaby Mince

Use a little fat bacon, some onion, herbs and minced lemon peel, nutmeg, pepper and salt (wallaby meat is always rather

lean). Add ketchup or tomato sauce. Breadcrumbs soaked in a little water may be added. Mince the meat and add other ingredients, mix well with the hands, form into cakes, fry and serve with mashed potato.

HEALTH TIPS

When a Cold is Coming on

Mix as much cayenne pepper as will fit on a sixpence (5 cents) in a teaspoon of honey. Can be mixed with milk.

Corns

Apply a little washing soda dissolved in vinegar. Don't use too much soda.

Arthritic Knee Problem

If, while gardening, arthritic knees play up, fill an old hot water bottle with bran or sawdust to use as a kneeling mat.

Stale Smoke

If stale smoke bothers you after last night's party, burn a few drops of vinegar in a hot shovel. *Don't try to heat the shovel in the microwave!!*

Bruises

Use a paste of oatmeal soaked in vine-

gar to relieve the pain of a bruised area.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dissolving Cork

A cork which has been pushed into a bottle will break up in a few days if the bottle is filled with cloudy ammonia.

Frosting Glass

Glass can be given a frosted effect by mixing sugar of lead with clear varnish and applying to the glass with a hard bristle brush. Or, dissolve woodworking glue to a thick paste and mix with whitening. This can be removed by washing with warm water.

Concrete Etching

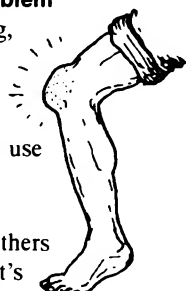
Concrete can be roughened to prevent slipping by mixing one part spirits of salts with seven parts of water, by volume. Wet the area, apply two coats of the mixture with a brush.

Bug Repellent

To discourage cockroaches mix one dessertspoon of borax with a teaspoon each of sugar and cocoa. Place in old crown seal tops and leave where cockroaches gather.

Paste

Paper paste can be made by boiling 300 ml of water and thickening it with flour.



Camping Hints

Too often we hear of camping trips that have ended in misery and discomfort, sometimes even disaster. Ensure your trip is an enjoyable success by following the following hints.

Take lots of plastic bags to keep things dry and to carry wet items. • Line your sleeping bag with several sheets of newspaper if you are really

cold. • Let your neighbours know when you're going and when you will be back. • Check with authorities and organise a permit if you are going to a national park. • Flatten aluminium drink cans and bury them in the sand to put your tent pegs through. This helps them to hold. • Find a forked stick to use for pouring

boiling water out of a billycan so you don't burn yourself. • Grab a few extra dry sticks for the next morning when you're out collecting kindling for your evening fire. • Consider taking these unusual but useful items with you when camping: a pocket saw, fly strips, a peg-less clothesline and an egg carrier.

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COMMUNITY GARDENS

by Penny Woodward, Rye, Vic.



Community gardens have been around for a long time and are currently undergoing a resurgence in inner cities around the world. In the USA the American Community Garden Association estimates that while only 20 or so community garden programmes were under way in the 1970s, there are now more than 600 nationwide. Community gardens are also springing up in capital cities around Australia and a network known as the Australian City Farms, Community Gardens and Enterprise Centres Network has been established.

In the last few years several very successful gardens have been planted in association with the Collingwood and Fitzroy high-rise flats. The original vision for these gardens was initiated by a tenant worker and an interchurch project known as Coll-link. The gardens were developed on land belonging to public housing, initially with funds from Coll-link and the City of Yarra, but they are now largely funded by the Department of Human

Services and the Department of Housing and Planning. Basil Natoli, with a background in special education, was employed in 1991 in a part-time capacity to oversee their establishment and ongoing development. Without his total dedication to the cause the gardens would not be the success they are today.

The first gardens to get off the ground were located between Harmsworth and Hoddle Streets, Collingwood. Tall fences were erected enclosing an area of land divided into 52 different small plots, each about eight square metres. Interested people in the high-rise flats were then offered one plot per family and every plot has been in use ever since. With the development of a second and third area, there are now nearly 100 plots in use in the vicinity of the Collingwood high-rise flats. Each plot represents the involvement of one person or family and the content and arrangement of individual plots is determined by the person or family who garden in it. There is no outside interference

as long as there is no infringement on neighbouring plots, for example high trellises which block sunlight.

Community gardens have wide ranging effects on the gardeners involved and the community in which they are located. They bring together neighbours and others of different cultures; help to build a sense of community through shared work, organisation and co-operation; provide positive recreation opportunities and chances for socialising. More obviously they allow the production of nutritious, familiar food.

With Basil's hard work and the dedication of the plot holders the Collingwood community gardens were so successful that in 1997 another was established near the Fitzroy high-rise flats with two more proposed for near the Richmond high-rise flats. The plans for the Fitzroy community gardens were more ambitious than those in Collingwood. As well as numerous plots, large compost bins and worm farms were also constructed. The worm

In the Collingwood garden the majority of plot holders come from the Vietnamese Australian community which is reflected in the fascinating range of herbs and vegetables grown. To begin with, only productive plants were grown, with the exception of some flowers like marigolds that are used in religious ceremonies. A fascinating range of edible plants can be seen in the gardens and over the last twelve months Basil has managed to identify them and put a botanical name to each. As well as more common ones such as watercress, mint, shallots and Chinese cabbage, some of the more unusual herbs and vegetables being grown are:

- The ongoing story of these gardens is very much a success story. It has been achieved because of the dedication and hard work of many people and can stand as a beacon to us all in an inner city region where the good news stories are few and far between.

HORTICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS

To celebrate their 21st birthday, the Australian Correspondence Schools have decided to offer a limited number of scholarships for their Certificate in Horticulture. This course is well established and is internationally accredited. Successful applicants will be entitled to a \$200 discount on course fees and a collection of horticultural reference books and videos. Anyone working in the horticultural industry is encouraged to apply. Phone 07-5530-4855 or 03-9736-1882 or check out the website on www.acs.edu.au

Contact the Energy Efficiency Centre advice line on 1300-363-744 to obtain free handy information booklets on summer cooling. Titles include *Choosing a Cooling System*, *Landscaping for Summer Cooling*, *Energy Saving for Windows* and *First Steps to Summer Cooling*. Or you can visit the Energy Efficiency Victoria website at www.energyvic.vic.gov.au

PUTTING SOME SPARK BACK INTO LIFE

by Geoff Robson, Scullin, ACT.

I have been acquainted with your magazine on and off for most of your 25 years, and would like to congratulate you on achieving this milestone. I often become confused when reading articles that refer to your publication as 'GR' as I think the author must be referring to me! My interest in affairs rural has waxed and waned over the years, but from now on it will be doing much more waxing than waning as my wife Christine and I will be moving to a small property in Victoria later this year.

Since the start of our life together fourteen or so years ago we have been firmly ensconced in the suburban and city life of Canberra. We had both lived here for about ten years before that. Canberra has been a wonderful place to live; so easy to get around, once you get used to the road system, with a plethora of restaurants, galleries, shops, and other places of interest that make life worth living. If one has to live in a city, then we reckon that Canberra is the city in which to live.

But we have both been feeling lately that life is somehow slipping by and that we are not achieving things, or even doing things that we enjoy and which provide personal fulfilment. It's an emptiness, or a lack of purpose that is very difficult to explain to oneself, never mind to anyone else. Speaking for myself I just had the feeling that there was something better in store for us if we could only widen our horizons a little and look outside the square that has been our reality in the past. I have always been keen on exploring a different lifestyle, and over the past couple of years have become eager to embark on some new endeavour. I figured that fifty was a very good age at which to begin again. I guess I planted in Chris's mind some two to three years ago the idea that I would like to 'go rural'. I think Chris thought I said 'go feral' as she wasn't too keen on the idea to start with and was

adamant that she didn't want to be isolated from the trappings and benefits of civilization.

I hope that the situation we now find ourselves in is a true compromise, and is not simply a result of me wearing her down to the point where accepting my ideas is the course of least resistance. Chris has had one major motivating factor in her decision making process as well. She is the owner/manager of a sportswear factory in which one of the major operations is screen printing. Chris doesn't do the printing herself (although she used to in the early days), but has become increasingly intolerant of the fumes and vapours released from the chemicals involved in the process. She finds that she is having reactions such as breathing difficulties and skin irritations

I just had the feeling that there was something better in store for us if we could only widen our horizons a little and look outside the square that has been our reality in the past.

that are making her business a strain rather than a pleasure and a worthwhile challenge. So she has become much more open to the idea of finding a healthier and more natural lifestyle that we hope will alleviate both the causes and the symptoms of her allergic reactions.

So, after coming to the logical conclusion that we should sell her business, and having nothing else to tie us to Canberra, we decided some months ago that now would be an opportune time to start on a new adventure called GAL (Get Another Life). But where to go and what to do? The tropics were out because Chris doesn't like the heat and humidity, and Antarctica was out because I want to escape the cold Canberra winters. We had something like 25 frosts in July alone last year. We thought initially about the hinterland of the NSW south coast.

But then fate, in the form of my family members, took a hand. My sister, who has retired, recently bought a four

and half acre property at Ruby, about five kilometres from Leongatha in South Gippsland. A short time later, my brother bought a slightly larger property at Nyora, about another 30 kilometres away in the general direction of Melbourne. I grew up in Morwell in the La Trobe Valley and had spent some of my childhood holidays on my uncle's farm in the same vicinity. My uncle and two of my cousins still live in the area. So in late November I took a trip down to visit my sister Margaret and fell in love with the area. It was so green, and Canberra was so brown. After Christmas I took Chris down to visit the area to see what her reactions were. And guess what? South Gippsland was not green anymore; it was brown too, but not as brown as Canberra. While I can't say that Chris fell in love with the area as I had, she could see what the attraction was, and although she didn't evince great enthusiasm,

she was certainly not negative about the area and the possibility of our relocating ourselves there.

We went to see a real estate agent and explained that some time over the next 12 months there was a possibility that we would be moving to the area, and, although we weren't ready to buy anything yet, would he be able to show us a couple of small acreages to give us some idea of what was available and at what price. He was indeed able to do just that and showed us two properties, one of which was a smidgen over four acres, was right on the edge of town and had only just come on the market. Well, it was OK. Pity we wouldn't be ready to buy for another six or eight months, but thank you very much for taking the time to show us and we will get in touch later in the year.

As we drove back to Canberra the following day (after having another sneak look at the property from the road as we drove through Leongatha), we couldn't stop talking about it – the garden, the

WHAT'S ON

house, how close it was to town (it was even on mains water for goodness sake), and what we could do if we lived there. The next working day we sent a fax to the agent asking him to make an offer to the vendors subject to the provision of a delayed settlement somewhere between the 1st of July and the 30th of September, which, we hoped, would give us sufficient time to settle all our affairs in Canberra. After a compromise on the price, the vendors were happy to accept the settlement date, as it would give them just the amount of time they required for their resettlement. So we bought a property which we had seen once for about 15 minutes. Impulsive one might say. But exciting, stimulating and just what a couple of almost middle-aged people need to put some spark back into their life.

What we are going to do when we get there we are not quite sure. Once we have sold up everything in Canberra (and it's now the middle of April and we still haven't sold our house or the business), we will not be destitute but we will have to find a way to provide ourselves with some income. We have a few ideas, but nothing concrete yet. We don't expect that our four and a bit acres will provide us with a living (although we will be trying for some degree of self-sufficiency), so we will have to earn some off-farm income. See, I'm getting the hang of the jargon already. But we have been in business of one form or another for quite a while now (we were both originally teachers), so if no one in Leongatha will employ a couple of old has-beens like us we can always turn our hand to something.

Maybe there are other people in the South Gippsland area who have done something similar, although not necessarily so impulsively. If so, we would love to hear how you made the transition from city to country, if you love it or hate it, and how you keep body and soul together. What are the advantages or disadvantages of your move? If you had your time again would you make the same move? What would you do the same or differently? We are busy planning and anticipating but we are doing it in a vacuum. We would be delighted to hear from anyone at our Canberra address (5 Dallas Place, Scullin, ACT 2614), or even a 'Hi!' or a note of encouragement on our e-mail (beeson@computech.com.au) would be fantastic.

Gardeners in Melbourne and Sydney are in for a treat with garden-related events being held in those cities, but other areas do not miss out either. Of particular interest for aspiring straw-bale builders are the workshops to be held in Byron Bay from mid February.

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

This major event in the gardening calendar is to be held at the Royal Exhibition Building and surrounding Carlton Gardens from 12 – 16 April. On display will be examples of the best displays from the horticultural industry from Australia and around the world. An extra interest will be the chance to see entries in the Floral Competition and the Shop Window Competition, expected to be of world standard. Ring 03-9209-9029 for more details.

KITCHEN GARDEN FESTIVAL

Take a walk back in time to discover the favourite vegetables grown in the 19th Century kitchen garden. Top chefs and suppliers will be demonstrating how these varieties were used. Workshops, talks, produce market, displays, sales, exhibitions and archaeology will all interest garden devotees. To be held at Vacluse House, Wentworth Rd, Vacluse, 25 – 26 March. For enquiries phone 02-9692-8366, or 0418-424-679.

GINSENG CONFERENCE

The Australian Ginseng Growers Association will be holding their third conference at Wangaratta from 26 – 27 February. This year's theme is 'Getting to the farm gate successfully'. Phone 03-5968-1877 for more details.

MELBOURNE SHEEP AND WOOL SHOW

This major event is not to be missed by anyone interested in wool (including alpaca, cashmere and mohair), or the sheep industry. Craftspeople will also be interested in displays and demonstrations of spinning/knitting/dyeing/weaving/felting. To be held at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds, 21 – 23 July. For more information ring 03-9281-7444.

HAY BALE WORKSHOP

The huge interest in this building style and the shortage of reliable information is likely to make this series of workshops a popular one with aspiring builders. The venue of beautiful Byron Bay is bound to be an added attraction. To be run over ten weeks from mid February to April and it's possible for participants to attend for one week or all ten. The cost of \$380 per week includes food and accommodation. Phone Michael on 02-6677-0080 for more details.

MORIAC HARVEST FESTIVAL

Centred around the giant pumpkin weigh-in and other vegie-related competitions, this is a fun family day out, now in its fourth year. Also of interest will be displays of alternative energy, pottery, heritage seeds, machinery, livestock, and other garden/farm related paraphernalia. To be held at the Moriac Primary School grounds, on the junction of Hendy Main and Cape Otway Roads (Vic), 26 March. Ring 03-5266-1298 for more details.

CANBERRA CRAFT FAIR

This major craft event includes over 60 exhibits as well as demonstrations and feature areas. Quilting and dolls will be special features. The Fair is to be held in Canberra at Exhibition Park from 23 – 26 March, and in other states later in the year. Ring 02-9939-4445 for all enquiries.

GROW ORGANIC 2000

This event will be held on March 18 & 19 at Camp Coolamatong, Banksia Peninsula, near Bairnsdale. Featured will be knowledgeable speakers and great organic food. Camping or bunk style accommodation is available. For details contact: Robin or Bill Grant, PO Box 1263, Bairnsdale 3875, ph: 03-5157-1586

AUSTRALIAN HERB CONFERENCE

To be held on July 7 to 9 at Townsville. Featured speakers include Penny Woodward and Bill Hankin. Workshop topics covering a variety of practical and innovative herby topics. For details contact: Valda William, PO Box 314, Aitkenvale 4814. Ph: 07-4773-6327

TRAVELLING WORMS

by Anne Hanley, Monto, Qld.

You probably think worms can't go travelling with you, but they can! In fact worms seem to be surprisingly hardy. I nurtured my first worms in the Can-O-Worms most carefully, never too warm, always just slightly damp, enough lime, and all the food scraps and manure they could possibly want. Like others before me, I found it slow in taking off. I'd actually filled all levels before the lowest was ready to harvest for its castings. In order to continue, I had to strain some off and reduce the number of waste items that went in. First to go were eggshells (too slow to breakdown) and teabags (far too many), and definitely no more cardboard. This worked, and the little bin ran smoothly until the time we had to move from Brisbane to central Queensland. It was too bulky to travel with us so it was given to an eager beginner, minus most of the contents of two layers which I reserved for starting again.

I placed these worms and their surroundings in a large plastic feed bucket lined with a thick plastic garbage bag and covered them with a damp hessian bag. No arrangements were made for drainage as this was to be a one-day drive. However, our newly reconditioned engine conked out and we were delayed nine days waiting for it to be redone. The worms, along with a styrofoam tray of grape cuttings, stayed in the back of the van, unattended, in the mechanic's workshop while we made the best of it in accommodation quite some distance away on the Sunshine Coast.

Since day three I'd expected the worms and cuttings to be dead, as it had been quite hot, however, nothing was wrong. Unwatered and without any attention at all they'd thrived. So, after arrival, I divided them into two bins set up the same way and continued to feed them and they've continued to thrive. As the bins fill I divide and restart them, taking the excess, which is the older bottom part, out to begin our vegetable plot on our bit of



Anne Hanley's daughter Anastasia beside the sealed bucket of worms that survived an unexpected delay in the back of a van in a hot workshop.

land out of town.

We had our first torrential rains just the other day and I found the bins full to overflowing immediately after (in the small hours of the morning), so I poured the water off using the lid and transferred them to an undercover spot. No serious damage was done and I'm getting masses of new worms, daily it seems. Possibly they prefer the heatwave 35°C temperatures.

I've read lots of books about worms since I started, but none of them ever touched on a transportable arrangement. What I think I learned from the travelling worm experiment is that worms are really quite hardy (in spite of all that is written about them) and also that they seem to tolerate extremes of temperature quite well – of course that was three months ago and its nearer 35°C here now, most of the time. (Still I think I'd try it again, if the situation arose.) I think it might be important that they are housed in their original bedding. I

have read that transferring them to new bedding causes death and only eggs survive. I'm glad I didn't make that mistake.

The most useful of the worm books that I've read is Amy Brown's *Earthworms Unlimited* (Australian Print Group Maryborough).

People who are finding worms slow to multiply might be interested in the little package method: Wrap melon (pumpkin/rockmelon etc) peel and leftover core into a little ball with the soft, seedy stuff on the inside then wrap in a piece of plain (not coloured) newsprint, still forming a ball shape. Before placing it in the worm bin make a hole through to the inside with your thumb and put it in hole-down, so the worms can crawl in. In just a few weeks you should find dozens of little progeny inside where the food matter was. Another favourite is a pressed wheat biscuit inside a banana skin; it's very good for fattening up the little progeny.

ORGANIC FOOD

WHAT IS THE GOOD OF IT?

by Mary Horsfall, Longwood East, Vic.

Attempts to compare the nutritional values of organic and conventionally grown food have not always clarified the issue. Studies have varied in the foods tested, the methods used, and exactly what was being tested for. Some have tested the mineral content, others the vitamin content. Some have counted photon emissions, or used copper crystallisation or paper chromatography techniques in attempts to measure the 'vitality' or 'life force' of food as distinct from the measurable nutrient components. Many backyard organic growers simply make a subjective taste-based judgement, believing their organically grown food tastes better than that bought from a supermarket and therefore must be nutritionally superior.

One comparison of the mineral content of organic and conventional vegetables, originating from Rutgers University in New Jersey, showed some astounding differences: organically grown lettuce, for example, having significantly higher amounts of calcium, magnesium, potassium, manganese, iron and copper, and organically grown tomatoes having 1938 times the iron content of those grown conventionally. Another set of figures, published in the November 1993 *Journal Of Applied Nutrition*, shows aluminium to be 67 percent higher, lead 41 percent higher and mercury 33 percent higher in conventionally grown food than in that grown organically. The same figures show many desirable micronutrients to be significantly lower in conventionally grown food: corn, for example, contained only six percent of the manganese normally present in the organically grown equivalent.

A recent study commissioned by the Organic Retailers and Growers Association of Australia examined the mineral content of four vegetables – tomatoes, beans, capsicums, silver beet – comparing those organically grown with conventionally grown, supermarket-purchased equivalents. Significant differences in favour of the organic produce were found (see attached chart). The

organic vegetables showed up to eight times the calcium, ten times the potassium and seven times the magnesium.

It must be borne in mind that no matter what the study results, there are always other factors to be taken into consideration. These include location of the farm or garden, soil types, freshness of the food tested, and stage of maturity at which it is harvested.

Along with claims for higher nutrient content of organically grown food, come concerns about the possibility of undesirable contaminants in foods grown using agricultural chemicals. While successive Market Basket Surveys talk about 'acceptable daily intakes' of pesticides and blandly reassure consumers that the 'food they eat is very low in pesticide residues and contaminants', many health-conscious consumers place no faith in the concept of *any* 'acceptable' level of pesticide (or other pollutant) ingestion.

Even artificial fertilisers used on crops and pastures are not without their problems. Superphosphate contains the heavy metal cadmium which can be passed to humans through ingestion of plants that have been grown in superphosphate-fertilised soils. Possible effects of excessive cadmium intake include impotence, high blood pressure and kidney disease. Cadmium also reduces the amount of zinc available in plants. High-potassium fertilisers can alter the soil nutrient balance in such a way as to cause magnesium deficiency, thus reducing the nutrient quality of food grown in it. Many studies have shown that the use of synthetic fertilisers, nitrogen in particular, results in higher levels of undesirable substances (aluminium, cadmium, mercury, lead, for example) in vegetables grown in the fertilised soil and decreased nutrients (notably vitamin C) and soil micro-organisms.

Synthetic nitrogen fertilisers are posing a growing human health problem. Their runoff or seepage into water supplies is a potential cause of nitrate poisoning in humans, especially young children. Nitrate is also ingested via the food grown in soil fertilised with synthetic nitrogen. Short-term effects of nitrate poisoning include dizziness and nausea, while long-term consequences can be miscarriages, birth defects and cancers. It is not only synthetic nitrogen, however, that has potential to become a problem. Excessive use of uncomposted, high-nitrogen manures, or their use in such a way as to lead to nitrogen-contaminated runoff, can also have similar dangerous consequences. Organic farming/gardening practices of composting and erosion control aim to prevent potential problems.

While results of the studies mentioned (and others not mentioned here) indicate the nutritional and health benefits of an organic food diet, perhaps the biggest benefit of organic food is not in its nutrient content or its lack of contaminants at all, but in the very methods by which it is grown. Organic growing enhances the long-term health of the soil, builds up organic matter, encourages soil microbial activity, and is set within the context of a farm or garden that encourages biodiversity of myriad life forms. This way lies true sustainability.

Comparison of Mineral Content					
Mineral		Beans	Tomatoes	Capsicum	Silverbeet
calcium	S	40	6.7	4.7	65
	O	480	67	84	1600
potassium	S	260	200	150	450
	O	1900	300	1600	2600
magnesium	S	26	10	11	69
	O	240	89	700	1700
sodium	S	<1	2.4	<1	180
	O	<10	26	20	1800
iron	S	.6	<.5	.5	1.4
	O	<.5	<.5	<.5	9.4
zinc	S	.38	.19	.13	.57
	O	3.4	1.2	2.5	130

O = organically grown S = supermarket produce
Figures shown are mg/kg.

REVITALISED PETS

by Dawn Lambie, Hastings, Vic.

The movie, *The Horse Whisperer*, with the theme of restoring a traumatised horse to health through patience and kindness was a lovely one, and, with the scenery and Robert Redford, it was a pleasant way to spend a Saturday night at the flicks.

I identified with the story as I was one of those tiresome children who brought home stray dogs on a regular basis, some of them dragged kicking and protesting and probably not lost at all. After I nursed and fed them they usually escaped and I would wait for the next unsuspecting canine to appear. In middle age you would think I would have more sense than to actually take on a couple of horses, even if they were on the way to the market destined to be turned into tins of dog food. I shake my head at myself when I think of it. But on seeing those two poor horses – so thin, with tangled manes and hoofs in a terrible condition, my heart just went out to them. Sensible no, but there you go.

It soon became apparent that we (my daughter and myself) would have to

learn in a hurry how to care for these boys and it would be a big job. We read everything we could on horses, though they taught us more in practice. Soon I began to regard horses with awe for their powerful, gentle and intelligent 'personalities'! Bobby and Dylan were as different as chalk and cheese. Bobby was a huge bay of almost 16 hands with a dignified and superior air, and Dylan the dun rebel, was flighty and nervous, fearful, with a pretty head, exasperating and endearing.

We agisted them, wormed them (fun and games with the head-shy Dylan), and set about bringing them back to health. This had been a particularly hard year for me emotionally, so to visit the farm and sit under the trees, book in hand, with a trail of horse apples to encourage them to come close on their own initiative, in the paddock, on a sunny warm day, was very calming to the spirit. Add to this the therapeutic value of brushing and combing of manes and tails and just petting. Graeme Kennedy once said he wanted to buy a

Clydesdale to put in a paddock to just pat it and I understood exactly. Those days were so peaceful and restorative, certainly not just for the horses.

I had found them a paddock of their own with a shed so they would have shelter, for which I paid extra, only to watch them spook themselves silly over it. They would not even go into it to eat their treats. They were happier in the 'back paddock' with all the other horses and with trees and scrub for shelter.

I had bought second-hand coats for them and Bobby accepted his with his usual style, but Dylan would never allow it and would gallop around in circles trying to rid himself of it. He won and I fretted about him being cold, but that was better than him doing himself an injury. We learned about horse diet, and found the smell of stables and hay very pleasant to the senses.

The boys didn't take long to realise they were on to a good thing here and started to respond to us, but Bobby would sometimes get impatient with me getting my boots stuck in the mud and give me a good thump from behind to hurry me up – the lucerne was waiting. He had a lovely trick of accidentally mashing me into the fence or doing a quick side-step on my foot and then leaning on me, all the while looking indifferent to the world. Dylan wasn't so subtle – he would shy at anything and everything; a plastic bag or gust of wind would set him off. He was quite the actor, but ignoring him worked best. It was best to allow plenty of time for



Dawn's daughter Anna with Dylan. He had been terrified of people and was especially 'head shy' but time and TLC won out.

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handling Dylan. Having his hoofs trimmed was a nightmare, so when it came time to drench him we decided it best to tranquillise him. I don't know the strength the vet administered, but Dylan stood, stoned, not moving, for the next 24 hours with Bobby standing guard over him, charging away any horse that came too close.

By this time they were getting nice and fat – good – I thought. Then was told to watch for founder and it was back to the books to learn about this new source of worry.

We discovered that Bobby was an old pacer. When people had tried to ride him they'd commented on his 'funny gait' and this explained a lot. He was a 'boss horse' proud and dignified, respected by the other horses. I came to love him a lot and he was affectionate in return. Tara, a young friend of my daughter, was one of those lovely long-legged girls who could throw herself bareback on any horse and gallop – a marvellous sight to behold – and she declared Dylan to be 'like riding an armchair'. However, I never could get it and, after being dumped by Bobby once too often, resigned myself to shanks' pony instead.

It came time to let them go. I really couldn't afford to keep them any longer and they now looked lovely, all shiny coats and flowing manes and tails, and were very well behaved. I placed an advertisement in *The Age* under ADOPTION, in large letters, with what I hoped was a heart-rending message. I got phone calls for a week! It was a matter of choosing the best home from all those wonderful kindly people. I finally chose a family with a hobby farm in Daylesford, with acres of paddocks and a caretaker who had been a trainer of pacers! The boys left for their new home, courtesy of Cranbourne Hire, with heads high and not a backward glance. I admit to having had a tear in the eye and thinking to myself that while it may have been a silly thing to do initially, it all turned out so well that sometimes acting on instinct isn't such a bad thing after all.

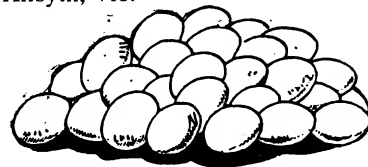


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EGG FLIP WITH PUNCH

by Jane Smith, Kilsyth, Vic.



Making the orthopaedic ward egg flips was my duty for a while as a very junior trainee nurse, back in my olden days when we were trained on the job, like apprentices. Mid-morning, every day, the entire verandah lot of thirteen young men recovering from fractures sustained in motorbike and car accidents were treated to an egg flip, served in a long glass. It helped them to mend. In those days when reconstructive surgery was nowhere near as advanced as it is now, fractures could take months to heal and a diet rich in protein and calcium was vital.

But, mention egg flips to a lot of people, and the reaction is bound to be: 'Egg flips? Slimy, yukky egg flips? No way. . .' So, an egg flip had to be good if it was not to be left sitting on a bedside locker, growing a skin of its own.

I was young and shy and prone to easy blushing, so the pleasure on my face must have been obvious when my appearance at the ward door with the trayful of morning egg flips was warmly welcomed, and sometimes even applauded. The whole verandah-lot were so pleased to see it was *me*. I, who could make wonderful egg flips, egg flips they could actually drink and enjoy.

'Oh crumbs,' I would say. 'I only make egg flips the way my grandmother showed me a long time ago when I was a kid.' Although, Nana didn't have brandy in the house, the way that they had brandy, medicinal brandy, in the ward cupboard near the Sister's desk, specially for topping up the egg flips. Brandy, or anything alcoholic at all come to that, had not entered into my personal experience before I made the ward egg flips.

I had no idea what was a proper dose, for instance. Was it a teaspoonful to each glass? Or really though, wasn't a teaspoon a little, well . . . mean? Surely an extra slosh of brandy into each glass of the finished product would be more generous?

Anyway, every drink I made was taken down promptly and without complaint, and isn't that the way it is meant to be? The patients sat leaning back on

their pillows looking rosy-cheeked and content afterwards, right up to lunchtime, so obviously the egg flips were doing them some good.

On the basis of this early experience, and perhaps still basking nostalgically in the adoration I received in my impressionable and relatively short time as the most junior nurse on the orthopaedic ward, I venture to write in to *Grass Roots* with my recipe for what I remember as a successful egg flip, even without the brandy. I mean, I wouldn't add brandy to an egg flip made for anyone under eighteen, or for anyone who objected to it.

PUNCHY EGG FLIP

Since the original recipe was geared to fill thirteen long glasses, I'll need to modify it to make just one egg flip. It goes like this:

To make for one person, you'll need one medium-sized egg, one cup of milk, one teaspoon of honey, and a little vanilla flavouring. And brandy, enough to give it a punch and make it attractive to somebody who might refuse outright even to try an egg flip in the first place.

Method

Separate the egg white from the yolk. Reserve the egg white in a bowl. Place the yolk in a jug with the milk and honey and vanilla, and stir together briskly with a fork. Now beat up the egg white into a lively froth, nearly to the stage where it makes little peaks.

Spoon the frothy egg white into a tall glass. Now fill the glass with the well-stirred milk and yolk mixture. Add a little brandy and stir gently with a fork to fold the egg froth evenly through the drink. The aim is to retain the light, frothy texture of the egg flip. Serve at once, with perhaps a little sprig of mint on the rim of the glass. Now here is an egg flip that makes a good nightcap, but is welcome at any time.

WORTH THE ACHES AND PAINS

by Betty Ford, Mount Seymour, Tasmania.

I have always grown my vegies organically, but the start of our big garden was when I successfully bid on a shadehouse at a country auction. It is actually a plastic covered 'hothouse' in the winter and a shadehouse in the summer. A few weeks after buying it my husband Graeme had it all set up, complete with shelves, and I was all set to go.

I scrounged around for punnets and pots, bought seed-raising mix, and very happily sowed lettuces, asters, sweet peas and some tree seeds that we had collected (tagasastes, blackwoods and cootamundra wattles). We decided it was time to do something positive with the farm we lived on, so, having at last got the tractor going (funds, or rather the lack of them, had prevented us doing so before) the garden was totally ploughed up and made three times larger, and both sides of the driveway also put to the plough. Graeme went into our bush and cut and split posts, posts and more posts. He was ready for fencing, but first had to replace the front gate, which he had redesigned with the tractor. Luckily, we had another one to take its place.

Our soil is very acid and needed building up, so I contacted people who had stables, cattle or chooks. Our own goats, sheep and chooks couldn't provide enough 'poo' for what we wanted, so, on our fortnightly shopping day we headed for Hobart with the trailer, to the racing stables where we could get horse poo for free.

It was snowing when we left home, but that had become rain by the time we got to Hobart. Graeme decided that we would get the horse manure first and leave the trailer at the racetrack. Fine! But it was a big mistake! As I said, it was raining, not a nice gentle rain, but a face-stinging soaking rain. We started loading the trailer and pretty soon, we were soaked! I don't know about Graeme, but I was wet through to my undies and if you have ever tried to walk through town wearing wet jeans, you will know that they are very heavy and very uncomfortable!

We got the shopping and headed for home. As we live an hour's drive from



Above: Fences down, tractor in as the garden is expanded. The garden was tripled in area and both sides of the driveway ploughed as well

Below: Graeme turning a steaming pile of manure.



Hobart, we had the heater going full blast, so were more or less dry by the time we reached our front gate. In the meantime, because of the snow, our granddaughter, who stays with us during the week, had been sent home from school early. She had mentioned to one of her teachers that we had gone to Hobart for horse poo. Teacher told granddaughter that we could go to her son's stables any time we liked. They live just outside our local town. After all our endeavors, we could have got it nearer home!

Next day, it was over to our neighbour's paddock to get the cattle's offering. Thank goodness, it wasn't raining. That lot went on to the horse poo, a layer of soil between, some lime, then the lot was covered in straw. That night, the goats discovered the pile. Ah! Christmas! Having made a fine mess, they at least left some of their droppings before wandering off into the bush again.

We then came to the time of planning and setting out the garden properly. Graeme had got the rotary hoe fired up and happily (well, he did have a grin on his face!) hoed the first bed. This was where I intended to put the permanent plants. Five crowns of rhubarb, blackcurrant bushes and one lone gooseberry bush are now firmly planted in their new bed.

The next bed was well manured and we decided it would be for legumes this year. Only twelve to fourteen more beds to go! Fruit trees have to be dug up and moved and, because I need to have at least a small area for lawn and flower beds, they would be at the entrance to the garden and I would be able to see them from the dining room window. There I plan to put seats, so at the end of the day we can sit and gaze upon our efforts. The

driveway is now fenced on both sides and is ready for trees. One of our neighbours gave me heaps of agapanthas and these will also be planted along the driveway. The sheep and goats are rather puzzled as to why they can no longer wander across the driveway now that the fences are up. Roger, our ram, has given me a couple of dirty looks as if to say, 'Where's my handful of grass then?' Usually, when I am working in the garden, he will come up to the fence and wait until I pull up a handful for him. Sorry, Rog, you'll have to wait until the lawn grows, then I'll use you as a mower.

Graeme has ploughed up the front paddock where he wants to grow seed potatoes, organically of course, and another acre (where we grew strawberries, so is already fenced) will be used to grow echinacea and other herbs. We are still gathering information on echinacea and got some very good help from New Zealand, via the Internet. Aren't computers wonderful?

Now came the time to go to the chook farm and get the poo from there. Graeme hitched up the trailer, put the stock crate on, surrounded by canvas so we could get extra, and off we went. The weather was quite reasonable when we left home, a little bit windy, but by the time we got there, it was raining and the wind had become gusty. Todd, the farmhand, had the loader all ready, so we drove to the pile and backed up to it. Graeme, meanwhile had noticed that the canvas had slipped a bit, so he held one side while I held the other. Just as Todd tipped the first load in, a particularly nasty gust of wind blew up and instead of most of the manure going into the trailer, it blew all over me! Oh, did it pong! To make things more embar-

assing, I had to go into the local shop on our way home. As I have white hair, the bits of chook poo really showed up! I was in and out of that shop like a rocket. The first place I went to on getting home was the shower. Graeme said he rather liked the smell, it reminded him of the chocolate factory. Not me it didn't!

Meanwhile, the shadehouse has had to have extra shelves put in it. Lettuces are coming along very well; ninety tagasastes have been transplanted into their growing pots; spring onions have sprung; lemon balm (one of my favourite herbs) has popped through; capsicums, cabbages, parsley and other vegies are thriving, as are the flower seeds. In other words, everything in the garden is 'blooming lovely'!

So far, it has been hard back-breaking work. We are not youngsters any more. I am 61 and Graeme 59, so at the end of the day, the armchair in front of the telly has been more than welcome, but the satisfaction of knowing that we have done our little bit, in not using pesticides or chemicals, is worth all the aches and pains, and the thought of eating our own produce makes it all worthwhile.

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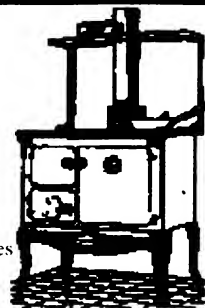
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MAY I RECYCLE YOUR RUBBISH?

by Robert Millet, Kalgoorlie, WA.

How many times have you used or heard the expression: 'One person's food is another person's poison'? Lately, I find the same concept applies to garbage, waste, or rubbish. A dedicated organic gardener, worm raiser, and recycler, I am still amazed at what treasures hard working folk continually toss out. I am fortunate in having two neighbours who gladly dump their compostible wastes over my side

fences, and then they cheerfully take what I pass over the fences to them – vegies, fruit, heaps of smiles. I feel good that their wastes were diverted from senseless landfill to the more rewarding belly-fill.

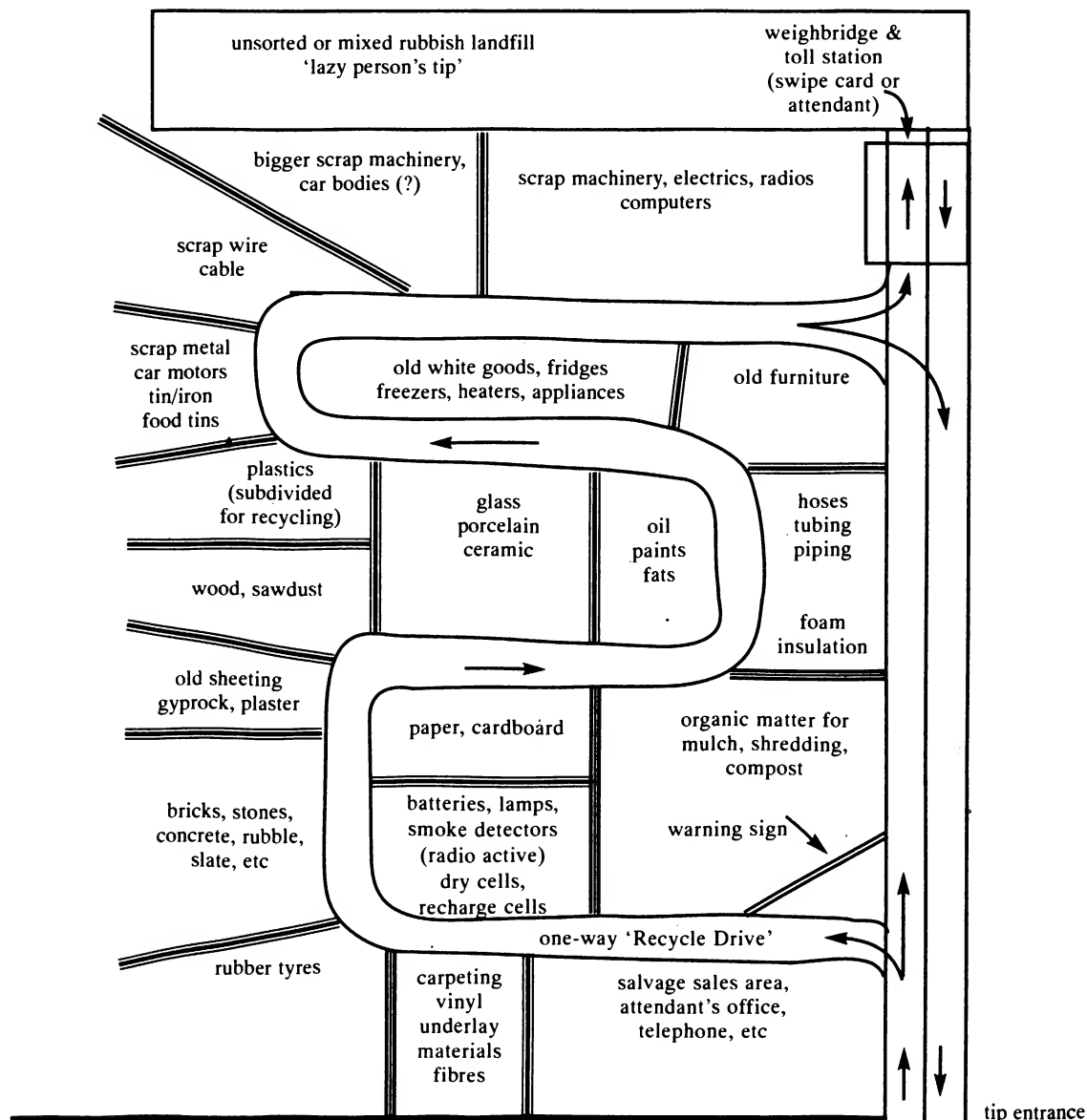
Whenever I read of a local council's decision to charge or raise fees to use the rubbish tip, I always find myself wondering when they'll stop hiding behind their typical response to most

problems – economic, social and environmental – namely: raise the price and charge everyone the same. Sounds fair doesn't it? Yet in reality it says: 'Bugger rewarding the efficient, get as much as we can from everyone.' A disgusting system that will not accomplish what is really needed.

A FAIRER SYSTEM

I'd like to see local tips following the

A Possible Recycling Tip Layout



fairer and environmentally sensible system outlined below.

Keep any rubbish tip fee at its present rate (or even reduce it), thus avoiding the negative political/social backlash which would surely come. Allow those who choose or need to use the tip to buy a book of vouchers that they can use any time. Thus, if a person never needs the tip, they pay nothing. Very fair. If they need to go to the tip many times a day, they can buy as many vouchers as they need. Making volume wasters pay the same fee forces them to consider recycling, reusing, reducing their wastes – a good prod for business minds.

Local tips could be divided into two main areas; as shown on the diagram. The first part – ‘Recycling Drive’ – ought to be free. Those who want to dump a mixed load can pay to use the ‘lazy person’s tip’. By allowing the first part of the tip to be free, it encourages people to sort rubbish at the recycling areas, thus avoiding a fee, and in addition reducing landfill. Long before the recycling areas are full, they will be legally allowed to be emptied by many of us who choose to recycle the items. Useful items can be salvaged also by tip employees and sold on site to help reduce tip costs, as is presently common in some tips. Another use might be service clubs who provide free firewood for pensioners.

TIP RECYCLING RESPONSIBILITIES

Critical to this plan to allow anyone to recycle what others leave at the free recycling areas is a huge sign proclaiming the following:

‘Recycling of any item in the recycling area is at individual’s own risk and Tip Management and Council are not responsible for any accident or problem arising from scavenging in the recycling areas. No legal suit will be accepted or recognised other than the Tip’s general liabilities for any person using the Tip to dump rubbish only.’ (Lawyers can put this in their usual legal jargon.)

Of course, any employees of the tip would be fully covered as legitimate employees doing their assigned work.

Persons who might be used or employed at the recycling area to act as attendants and guides can be: unemployed, disabled, retired persons, prisoners (low risk), volunteers who

believe in recycling, slow learners, work-for-dole persons, unskilled youth, ‘community service’ persons, service clubs.

A special industry I feel would be viable in many larger towns or industrial areas, working in conjunction with the ‘free-recycling’ concept, would be the dismantling of all the electric/electronic equipment regularly thrown out: metal from batteries, coils, dry cells, gold from electronics parts, nuts and bolts, plastics, and so on. This would be a type of ‘value-added’ recycled parts. The environment would win, plus everyone else connected with it.

KERB-SIDE COLLECTIONS

The present system of a rubbish collection fee for all householders sounds fair, but those who do not buy ‘rubbish packaging’ and do practise recycling and composting produce much less waste per week. Why should efficient householders pay for the same service when they use less? And why are they being asked to subsidise those who are wasteful and do not care about recycling or reducing waste?

On average, I only need to put out my wheelie bin once a month, so I ought to be billed a quarter of the standard fee. That’s fair. Others who need two bins (or more) per week should pay two (or more) fees. That’s fair too. The pressure is then on them to reduce their fees by reducing their wastes. If councils could give ‘low-wasters’ a special bin that is picked up only once a month, then they could have quarter-fees without any great fuss or elaborate technical/electronic accounting systems that would surely fail.

Putting a bin out once a month should not present a health hazard because waste from low-waste households would be miscellaneous bits of glass, coloured paper, metal, plastics, etc. Organic matter would be recycled in a worm farm, compost, chooks, or dug directly into the garden.

PART-FEE SYSTEM

To put a ‘full-fee/quarter-fee’ system into place, the following simple solution would work:

Full-fee customers will have the standard green wheelie bin (or whatever colour is used) picked up once a week as usual. Quarter-fee customers will have a red bin (same size as green

bin) picked up on their usual first collection day of each month. If red plastic bins are not available from a supplier, then the green bin can be painted in a specified manner to guarantee the user is on quarter-rate fees. People who want to shift from one system to the other (red or green bin) simply have to inform council, pay an adjusted fee, and pick up a different bin.

KERB-SIDE RECYCLING

Some towns in Australia have kerb-side recycling pickups. This system however has several faults, and the main one is that a lot of driving is done to gather up only a fraction of the waste. Consider this logical alternative:

A large quantity of the waste that can be recycled comes from stores and shops such as flash, impulse-buying packaging. A major supply of waste comes from food shops. Therefore, each store that sells goods ought to have bins to put the rubbish in, sorted by the consumer. Thus, we take home tins, plastics, jars of food; eat the food, and next week buy more tins, plastics, jars of food. Why not encourage consumers to return their containers to recycling bins near the stores? In this way no additional driving or collecting needs to be done to accomplish the first (and major) level of recycling. Once the bins near the stores are full, it then becomes economic to empty them at the tip recycling area for indefinite storage. Once recycling businesses know that local tips have piles of glass, tins, plastic, etc for near-free pickup costs, they will be there to collect on a regular basis.

So, if your local tip is considering a recycling plan along these lines, support it, and encourage others to ask the question: ‘May I recycle your rubbish?’

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SANITY SAVERS

Activities For Energetic Preschoolers

by Liz Zylinsky, Newham, Vic.

Last time I introduced readers to some of the activities that helped us enjoy our enforced indoor time during a cold European winter. The creative and educational enterprises described are suitable for parents and preschoolers everywhere to enjoy together. This article suggests a couple of favourite recipes to get you cooking and some vital letting-off-steam-while-making-a-mess-and-a-lot-of-noise activities.

COOKING

For me, cooking brings back happy memories of helping Mum make the cakes and biscuits which were always on hand at home. It is a useful way to fill in time with preschoolers too, even if they do constantly ask if it's time to lick the spoon yet!

This recipe is a favourite and uses up those icky black bananas no one will eat.

Banana Biscuits

2 tbsp butter/margarine
 ½ cup sugar
 1-2 ripe bananas
 1 cup wholemeal flour
 2 tsp baking powder
 1 tsp honey

Preheat oven to 190° C. Cream butter and sugar. Add honey and banana and beat in well (don't worry if it looks like vomit). Mix in flour and baking powder. Place teaspoonfuls about four centimetres apart on greased trays. Sprinkle with ground nuts or coconut, if desired. Bake 10 minutes or until light brown. A pastry brush and oil is a fun and easy way for

kids to grease the baking trays. Makes about 35.

If your children aren't keen eaters, try tempting them by having them make it. This is a favourite with our two (although they need little encouragement to eat!).

Pizza

Make the dough together with the children helping both to mix and to knead.

300 g flour*
 180 ml warm water
 2 tsp dried yeast
 1 tsp salt
 1 tbsp oil

*Wholemeal flour will need more water.

Mix the dry ingredients together. Add herbs or a handful of grated cheese for something different. Add the oil and water and mix to combine. Tip onto bench, take a portion each, and knead until the dough feels smooth and doesn't stick to your hands. Replace in bowl, cover with a damp tea towel and put in a warm place until doubled in

size (about an hour). The car is a good spot on a cold but sunny day! When 'proved', punch in the middle and knead lightly. Roll out onto baking paper, which is washable and reusable and makes it easier to slide into the oven. Preheat the oven to 225° C.

Spoon tomato paste onto dough. Armed with a spoon each, spread the paste over the dough with the spoon's back. Sprinkle cheese over. Now the really fun part: the toppings. Our favourite is capsicum (any colour) and mushroom. But try grated carrot or zucchini, sliced onion, crushed garlic, pineapple, ham, prawn, tuna, salami, anchovies, olives, even egg. Everyone can have a go, even crafting a section of the pizza to their personal requirements. Don't forget the herbs – oregano and basil are particularly good!

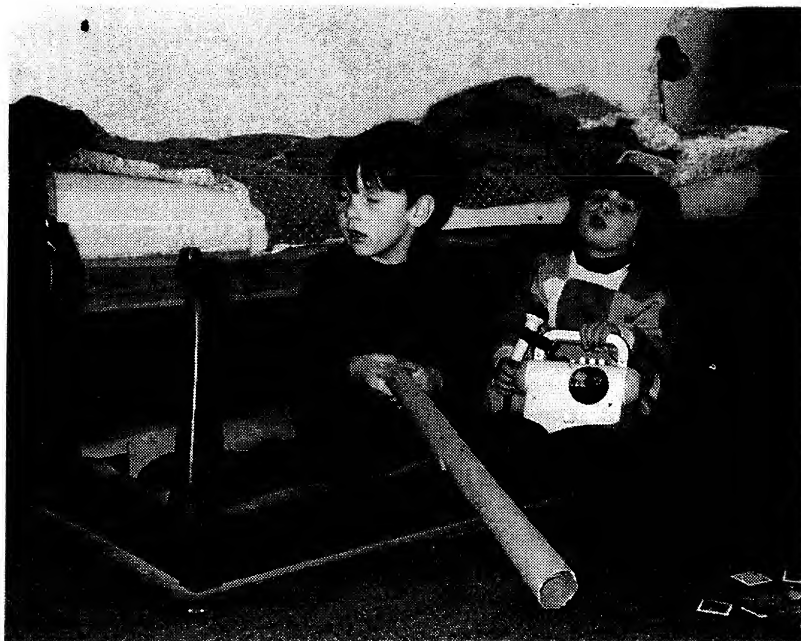
Let the pizza be as untidy as the children have made it and bake 15-20 minutes, or until the dough is cooked.

ENERGY BURNERS WITH OOMPH

By now, you probably have the idea that we're a quiet, studious bunch. Well, you're right, but we also had our boisterous games. These were our favourite energy burners when stuck inside:

Skittle Bash

If you have a coffee table of reasonable size which can be cleared quite easily (ie, isn't under 60 centimetres of GRs and gardening books, plus last week's ironing), grab two skittles or two table tennis bats (or even two rolled up newspapers), plus a



Simeon and Iona playing 'row row row your boat' in an upturned coffee table.

soft, light ball. With one player at each end, the ball is hit to each other. A ball hit off the edge of the table is a point to the opponent, a ball hit off the end is a goal and worth three points to the hitter. The first to 18 points wins!

Cubbies

Try a table, a cot turned on its side, or even just a couple of chairs, plus a blanket, sheet or doona, for a great cubby. A pretend (or if you are very brave, a real) picnic in the cubby is fun.

Ships

A coffee table, turned upside down (by an adult) makes a lovely ship. Try cardboard tubes for oars, or a jumper on a stick for a sail.

Pirates

Lay out cushions, pillows, towels, etc around the floor. The aim is to get from one side of the room to the other, or around a table, from 'island' to 'island', without touching the floor and getting 'wet'. If there is a group, one can be a pirate, trying to catch the other 'travellers'.

Hide and Seek

Yes, it even works with a two year old, a four year old, and Mum! Take it in turns, helping to count if needed. It may bear

no relation to hide and seek as you remember it, but it's great fun anyway.

Make Believe

Small children love to play pretend, as well as express themselves in music, stories and dance. Simeon enjoys putting on a puppet show, using dolls, socks, or just his hands. An armchair, sofa, or bed is all you need for a stage. He also tells a great story (always, of course, starting with 'once upon a time') and will use any book as a prop. An audience isn't always needed and in fact can embarrass if not requested.

Music

All children love to sing and dance, particularly if Mum or Dad join in. The ABC shops (and mail order) have a great choice. Playschool's compilations are particularly good, as are the famous Wiggles.

Making music requires forbearance, a closed door, or earplugs. Not a good idea for those days when Mum's in a bad mood. Saucepans and spoons make drums. Saucepan lids make cymbals. Guitars and violins are of the totally imaginary variety. Wooden blocks make clappers or rhythm sticks. Cardboard tubes make great didgeri-

doos. Plastic bottles with rice or beans become maracas. You may have more ideas, but these make more than enough racket for me!

Freeze


This is a perennial favourite game. One person is in charge of the music which must play and stop. When the music is on, everyone dances. When it stops, everyone must freeze in place. Little people love to fall down; older ones will try very hard not to move a muscle. For the older ones, anyone who moves is out.

Videos

Finally, I admit that for those wet/windy/snowy/freezing/ Mum's-having-a-bad-one days, I also brought some of the children's favourite videos. I know some readers of GR aren't keen on TV or videos for their children, but I've found that *Playschool* and *The Book Place* (Network 7), in particular, have taught the children a great deal, as well as giving me ideas for activities to do together. Videos are also useful when the children are tired or off colour, but won't nap - it settles them down, stops them fighting, and gives them a rest.

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MOVING HOUSE

by Michael Laurent, Armidale, NSW.

For some reason, the thought of moving is enough to send a shiver of fear up and down the stoutest of spines. Perhaps it's trepidation at the unknown, a destabilising influence, lack of security, not having all things familiar close to hand, or leaving friends and family far away. Whatever the reason, it *can* be made a little easier, even – dare I say – fun?

Admittedly, we have had a fair bit of experience as we have just completed move number 40. And I don't mind saying that I hope it's one of our last. Still, who knows what tomorrow will bring? One day we hope to move to our own little bit of the country so there at least is number 41!

Anyway, to get on, you have just decided that you want to shift. Do the benefits outweigh the disadvantages? It sounds rather obvious, but it's amazing how often we don't use a little bit of logic to weigh a pending decision. And if the advantages are greater than that's something to be viewed positively, not with horror at the size of the efforts ahead. When faced with a mountainous task, take little nibbles often and suddenly it isn't so big.

Our latest move has put us on the New England Tablelands – somewhere we have been slowly working our way towards – albeit in a very circuitous route via Queensland and Victoria! As we had little money and the move involved approximately 1200 kilometres, we did not have the resources to go up and scout around first. It was all or nothing. Everything we had was put into one of those self-storage type units to be called upon at a later date as finances permitted. We then loaded the car and a box trailer with what we thought we needed to allow us to establish ourselves and live in the meantime.

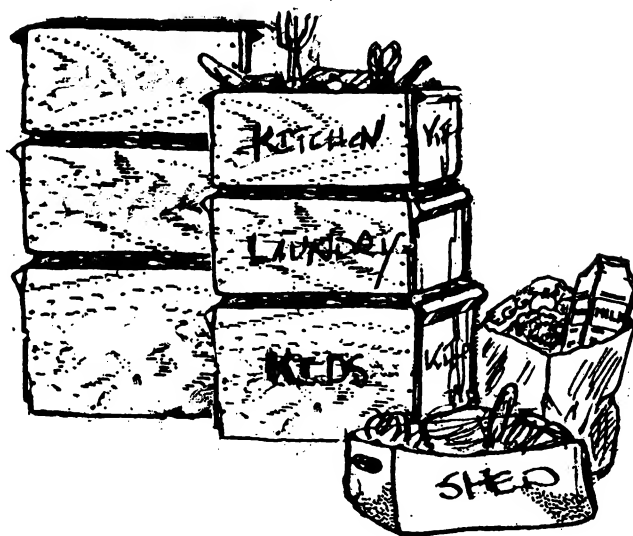
And guess what? Despite a couple of visits to the Salvation Army and St Vincents for some cheap furniture, we are sitting here wondering if we really do need the 20-odd cubic metres of gear sitting down south! Sure, some things would be quite handy, but in the main a lot of what we have is superfluous. And

that after what we thought was some very savage culling prior to departure. In fact, most of what we packed was viewed very critically as to whether or not it warranted the cost and effort of transport. This need not be so drastic if you are not moving far and your transport costs are low, but for a long haul every dollar counts. This is something that comes very hard to a dedicated hoarder and scrounger such as myself.

GETTING READY

Having completed step one (The Decision), you are now ready to start packing – hopefully without being in a tearing hurry. Experience has taught us that you use *smaller* boxes rather than larger as they won't break your back, can get the whole family involved, are stronger for their size (usually), and can fill up little nooks and crannies far better. Never again will we use large boxes. Extra chests are great if you have them available, but once again don't overload them. Why not line them with a large garbage bag and use them for clothes, or other light or delicate items? Certainly not for crockery or books. These should go into nothing larger than a soft drink sized carton. We obtained a heap of strong, small size boxes from the local paint shop, who are usually more than happy to get rid of them, and they were perfect for weighty items.

While your packing is underway you will find yourself culling items automatically. If you put them into three piles, one to sell, one to give away and one to throw away (our smallest!) – then you might acquire extra money and help others as well. We found that food items were the



biggest headache. Whatever was stocked in the freezer was used in the preceding weeks, but all the staples – spices, cereals, sauces etc etc – can only be packed away if you don't intend to store your possessions for too long. Also, anything that carries batteries should be de-activated and the batteries removed otherwise leakage or worse may result. There's not much point in having your smoke detectors going off in an unattended storage facility. In fact, we took a couple of ours with us and sat them up high in all the accommodation we used. After all, fires can happen anywhere.

A large stock of old grain bags is an absolute must as they are perfect for a



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large number of garage and outdoor items. Just toss things in, tie with string and label. They are great to use on the end of gardening tools too, as having rakes, hoes and shovels loose can make a real mess of any good furniture.

LABELLING

How good is your memory? Can you remember where that little gizmo was packed? Why bother? We simply label each box or bag with the room it came from because that's probably where it's going to live in the new place. If your gear is in storage and you need to find something, how handy is a list of contents on each carton? Whilst discussing premove access, some storage units are larger than others and the extra space is great for allowing an access aisle with everything packed up to the rafters on either side. This can be a real boon when you elect to use self-storage at the *destination* end while you may be in temporary accommodation. Being able to get at bits and pieces (especially clothes) can be a godsend.

TRANSPORT CHOICES

Are you lucky enough to own a truck or have a friend who owns one? What

about a trailer? Any choice will be largely dependent on the distance that you need to travel. Beyond a certain point it becomes uneconomical to move yourself. A good quote from a removalist can actually be cheaper than doing it on one's own by hiring trucks, loading/unloading etc. Since most truck hire places are now independents under a national 'umbrella', one-way rentals at reasonable rates are a thing of the past. They need the truck returned to the originating depot so it can cost up to double the one-way rate. And the chances of being able to score a 'ferry' run (returning the vehicle back to its depot) at lower prices is very chancy.

Rail is another story these days too. We happened to have a siding close by and I thought why not get a six-metre container dropped off and we'll fill it up. Hah. You are charged for three containers as that is what a flatcar will hold. And that meant an overall price of more than double a removalist. We live and learn, don't we?

Your decision as to how to get it all from here to there will depend on how much, how far, how soon, how are the finances and where are the headache tablets.

IN CLOSING

Hopefully, it is possible to minimise what can be an extremely stressful time for all concerned, especially for children. They hate being uprooted and leaving friends behind. Any way that you can ease their plight is well worthwhile. It really helps if they can view the impending changes with confidence. When househunting we made sure that our two were part of the decision making process. Their chagrin at the changes therefore turned to excitement and anticipation. And don't forget to nurture your own mental state. The odd treat or two doesn't go astray at times like this either!

And before I forget, remember to check your insurances to make sure all is covered en route, in storage, in the trailer or wherever. It would be a major bummer to go through all that stress and lose everything.

Best wishes and good luck to all.

This was obviously not the last move for the Laurent family as our recent letter to the Armidale address was returned. Michael, or anyone who knows his current whereabouts, please contact GR.

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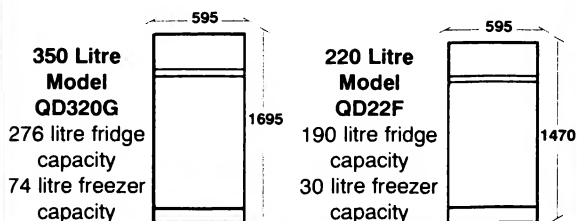
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SUCCESSFUL PAWPAW GROWING

by Gisela McIntyre, Bundaberg, Qld.

To begin with, you need seeds from a very good pawpaw, one you enjoyed eating and with good dark shiny seeds. It is often advised that you should take seeds from a locally grown tree. In my opinion this is not necessarily so. I brought seeds home from northern Queensland several years ago and now have the pleasure of harvesting fruit, the red round kind, called 'Hawaiian'.

I washed the seeds in a colander, meticulously removing all the fleshy bits clinging to the seeds – quite a painstaking ordeal. Believe me it pays off, as it will keep the ants at bay. The seeds were dried in the open air until they didn't stick to one another anymore.

I lugged two buckets of river sand home, let the hose run into it and washed all the surplus dirt, leaves and unwanted debris out of it. I stirred the bottom of the bucket a few times with the hose nozzle and let the water overflow until the sand looked really clean. I put the bucket at an angle so the surplus water could run off.

I had prepared a polythene box lined with a plastic bag at the bottom, leaving a few holes for excess water to escape. I half-filled the box with the sand, spread the seeds evenly out and added a small topping of sand to cover them.

I placed the box in a suitable position, handy for watering and with sufficient sun to give them a good start. The Department of Primary Industries suggests fertilising the young seeds with half strength liquid fertiliser. Later on, after they have been potted, a full strength mixture can be applied. The fully grown trees like a good fertiliser, as for other fruit trees. It might take three to four weeks before they start showing. I never remove them until they look healthy with a good growth of leaf on them.

I had ten-centimetre pots prepared with lots of good compost at the bottom and some coarse sand in the potting mix. As there were plenty of seedlings,



Pawpaw trees are readily propagated from seeds and will eventually produce copious quantities of delicious and versatile fruit.

I put three to four small plants together in one pot. They might need transferring into a larger pot later on and will be put into the ground next spring, to be harvested in another years time. This way I have a new group of seedlings coming on each year.

Pawpaws are delightful for break-

fast with lemon and sugar, or yoghurt; refreshing with a salad lunch and for dessert with a homemade custard.

I have grown pawpaws successfully in Brisbane, down into New South Wales, where cool winds blew, and of course now in the subtropical region of Bundaberg.

PLANTING TIME

In south-eastern Australia, in areas of good winter rains, optimum tree planting time is June-July in low rainfall areas; August-early October in medium rainfall areas; and October to mid-December in high rainfall areas or where irrigation is available.

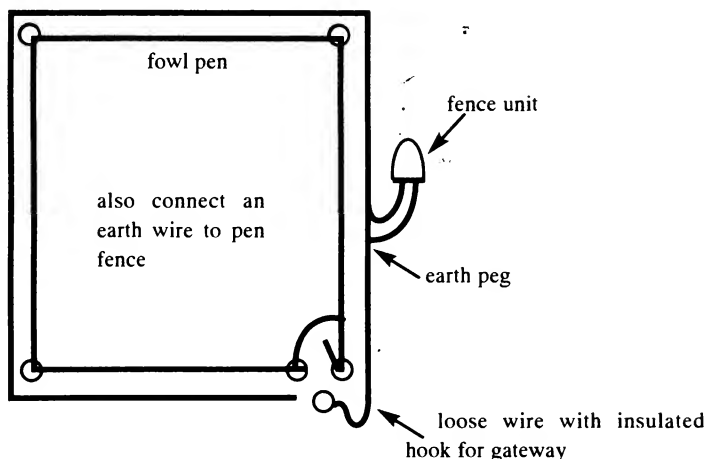
KEEPING FOXES OUT OF FOWL PENS

by John Tucker, Capel, WA.

Having been a regular reader of the Feedback section of GR, I've seen two requests come up from time to time; they are how to control grasshoppers and how to keep foxes out of fowl pens. I have already dealt with the grasshopper problem in GR 118, so now here's a shot at the fox problem.

I used to have a free-range piggery and to keep the pigs in I used a mains-operated electric fence. One morning as I went to feed the pigs, a fox was in the paddock and was too frightened to get out and I was able to shoot him. After seeing this happen I knew I could apply the same system to protect the chooks.

The fence units I used for the pigs were fairly strong, but a unit of medium strength would do the job very well. The wire needs to be 25 to 30 cm out from the fowl netting and 15 to 20 cm above the ground. You need a special hook attached to put across the gateway. Make sure the gate opens into the pen as



this may save you from getting a 'kick' off it. The posts for this I made by cutting an old 1.8 m steel post into three and attaching a pinlock insulator to each one. Once I set up this fence I never had any more trouble with foxes.

I have since seen another fence around an organic orchard where the owner was running all sorts of poultry under his trees. He had an ordinary fence with pig netting around it. The foxes could not get through the netting and he had a 70 cm high electric wire 15 cm out from the top of the netting so that as they tried to crawl over it they got a kick off it.

Putting sheets of corrugated iron around a fowl pen can help save your chooks because foxes are very good at doing a dance outside the pen and they mesmerise the poultry which will just put their heads through the wire to be bitten off. This is also how they get them

out of trees.

This method has been very good at protecting our chooks, as up until this discovery the fox had always won the battle but now I'm the winner.

Good luck with your battle against the fox.

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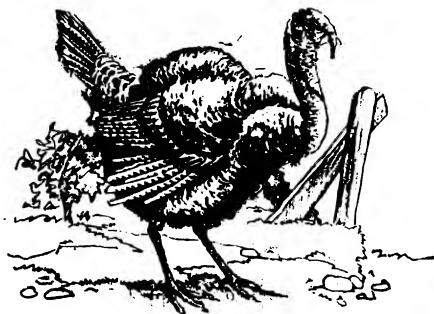
BROODY GOBBLER

Our turkey gobbler has taken over the hen's nest and is sitting as though broody. We're all rather in awe of him as he is so big, but could he be sick or have leg problems we're not aware of, and what should we do? We know Megg is very good with this species so maybe she has encountered this.

**Jan and John Bates,
SAMFORD 4520**

Mr Turkey isn't supposed to but he can and does go broody on rare occasions and will hatch eggs if sitting on fertile ones. Broodiness is terribly hard to break in this species and they will sit on a stone for months if allowed to. Moving to another shed or pen will help break the setting desire, but ensure there are no nests or corners with litter that could be made into a nest. Offer tempting food, small meals regularly are best, and keep him moving around. To stay broody he needs a quiet dark nest, so ensure this is not available. Hot weather exacerbates this condition but there is little you can do about the ambient temperature.

**S & D Wills,
MOUNT GAMBIER. 5290**

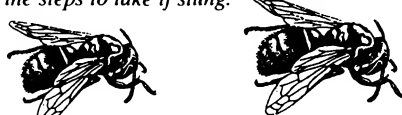


A BEE PROBLEM

A neighbour has a couple of bee hives in his backyard and we find the inmates are a real problem when watering the vegies in the afternoon. They also cluster around the fowls' water container. As we have young children we're concerned they will get bitten and react adversely. We like the idea of bees pollinating the flowers and vegie crops, but how do we manage their presence around water sources?

**Andrea and Guy,
YARRA GLEN 3775**

It's possible your neighbour is not providing adequate water for the bees or the hive is sited in the sun and so becomes hot, with the result they have to look elsewhere. If relations are good you may be able to enquire about this and gently suggest appropriate changes. The other course of action is to set aside a shallow water container specifically for the bees in a quiet corner of your property. Cover with a piece of netting or mesh so the bees can access the water without falling in and drowning. This container should have shade most of the day, but in particular from afternoon sun, and be refilled regularly. It should draw bees away from the fowls' water and also garden hose. A reread over John Hogkinson's article in last issue - The Bee Sting - will explain basic bee behaviour and the steps to take if stung.



MOGGIE FLEA CONTROL

Our local paper had a great little article on natural control of fleas recently, and I thought it worth paraphrasing for GR cat keepers. A little fresh garlic in feed each day is the first step. For cats, place a drop of pennyroyal oil on the end of their tail and then work it up through the rest of the coat. Sprinkle a little of the following mix on bedding etc: 40 drops of pennyroyal oil and 10 ml methylated spirits, placed in a bottle and shaken well. If you have a laundry pump spray, use this to dispense the mixture or flick a couple of drops on bedding, chairs, rugs etc. Remember

that pennyroyal used neat is overpowering. Shake and air bedding daily. If your cat comes inside, after returning bedding to the house sprinkle this with a mixture made from 500 g of bicarbonate of soda and 18 drops of oil of pennyroyal. Sprinkle also on carpet and mats the cat uses. Vacuum up mix, after one hour. I do hope this will help readers.

**Vera Johnson
KEPERRA 4054**

This advice has come from an experienced and reputable source, but we caution readers that we have in the past received reports from animals having being poisoned from excessive use of undiluted pennyroyal oil. This is a particular danger with cats because of their self-grooming behaviour. As with all areas of human and animal health care, due regard for safety must be a first consideration.

CHOOKS JUST LOVE YOGHURT

Poultry really enjoy yoghurt and sour milk products and these are believed to have a beneficial effect on their digestive systems. Mix yoghurt in with their mash twice a week. Buttermilk was originally a preventative for coccidiosis prior to chemical medications, while whey powder and acidophilus are still used as a probiotic in the chicken industry.

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ECO NEWS

PROTECTING PORT PHILLIP

Victoria is leading the world with legislation introduced in January aimed at preventing the introduction of new marine pests. Central to the new law is a requirement that ballast water – a recognised source of pest organisms – must be exchanged at sea rather than in harbour, thereby preventing potential pests from invading bays and harbours where they can quickly multiply to the detriment of the natural ecosystem.

A recent survey of Port Phillip Bay found 99 exotic/introduced organisms, 10 of which are, or have the potential to be, environmental pests.

AN OILY PROBLEM

Adequate maintenance is important to keep cars running properly and to retain their value, but it also has important environmental benefits. Oil can cause contamination of waterways, not only by direct runoff from leakage caused by lack of maintenance, but also by seepage into ground water. Motorists can avoid this problem and help the environment by ensuring their vehicles are well maintained to prevent leaks, and by disposing of old oil and petrol correctly. Local councils will be able to advise on recommended collection procedures, or Victorians can ring EcoRecycle on 1800-353-233.

Another often-overlooked cause of ground water contamination is the practice of 'sealing' dirt driveways with used petroleum products

GIPPSLAND WIND FARM

Renewable energy company, Primagy, has embarked on a long-term wind generation project, the first stage of which will see the construction of hundreds of 50-metre turbines across the Gippsland landscape over the next three years. This stage expects to create employment for up to 2000 workers in the Latrobe Valley.

The next stage is intended to construct 1000 turbines across Victoria and expectations are that 15,000 jobs will result from the manufacture and export of the technology.

This is seen as a major move towards addressing Australia's inter-

national obligation to reduce green house gas emissions.

POLLUTION CONTROL IN A NUTSHELL

Scientists at the US Department of Agriculture are working on a process that converts waste macadamia, pecan and almond shells into granular activated carbons (GACs) for use in industrial clean-up applications. GACs are used in a variety of ways, including fish-tank filters, waste water treatment and soil remediation.

The nutshells have a highly porous surface that adsorbs contaminants such as lead, toluene and benzene. Only a gram of nutshell carbons can have a surface area of 900 square metres. Currently, coconut shells and coal are sources of GACs, but both are more expensive than nutshells and coal is more environmentally problematic.



ECOLOGICAL COST OF MEAT

A study undertaken by an American environmental advocacy group has ranked the production of beef, poultry and pork as being second only to cars in the cost to the environment. Beef production was shown to be 17 times more water polluting than was the process involved in pasta making. It is also 20 times more harmful to wildlife habitat than is pasture production.

SPOTLIGHT ON GE

In Japan major food and beverage manufacturers are implementing bans on the use of genetically modified soya and corn components in their products. Other major companies are investing in facilities for handling and importing non-GE soya products.

In the UK pollen from genetically modified oilseed rape has been found four and a half kilometres from an official trial site.

In the USA research from the Department of Agriculture has indicat-

ed that GE crops are not producing higher yields or using less pesticide, as claimed by GE proponents. In 12 of 18 areas of GE crops no increase in yields was found, while in some areas non-GE varieties yielded 10 percent or more higher than the GE equivalents. In one region, however, Bt maize yields were 30 percent higher than were yields from traditional crops. In seven of twelve areas studied at least the same amount of pesticide was used on GE crops as on traditional varieties. Herbicide-resistant, Roundup Ready soybeans had from two to five times more herbicide applied per acre than would normally have been used.

Thailand is proposing to ban the import of GE foods and to establish GE-free agricultural zones that will guarantee the agricultural process from seed to harvest.

GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY

A Victorian company has developed LED traffic lights that are set to replace the existing halogen and incandescent globes. The new lights will last 10 times longer and reduce power costs by up to 80 percent. They also have an added safety factor in that they do not fail without warning as do the existing lights, but rather, dim gradually. In September last year one intersection in Hawthorn had been fully converted to the new system with more to follow. A statewide conversion is expected to lead to a saving of 2.4 million dollars a year in energy usage and maintenance.

WALLABY COMEBACK

The bridled nailtail wallaby, once common throughout large areas of Australia, was extinct in NSW by the 1920s in the too-common scenario of a native animal being unable to compete with introduced predators and having its habitat destroyed by grazing. The discovery of a remnant group in Queensland in 1973 led to the institution of a breeding programme at Dubbo zoo. Numbers at the zoo have increased encouragingly and early last year six animals were released into a fenced predator-proof 390 hectare forest in NSW.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

Hi there. I'm an Aussie who has finally decided that it's high time I got out of the city (Sydney) and all the rubbish that goes with it to see my own country. To this end I will be taking all of 2000 off and will be travelling around in an old Hiace Campervan that I've done up. My plan is to go WWOOFing, as I figure this would be one of the best ways to get to see this country, meet real people and get the experience I'll need to set up my own farm. What I would particularly like to do is to get some experience building **TRADITIONAL ADOBES AND MUD EARTH HOMES** with the long-term view of eventually building my own one day. What I was hoping was to see if any readers out there are in the process of building an adobe (or about to start) and would maybe like a hand, along the lines of WWOOF. If you can write to me and let me know the relevant details, such as when, where, what stage you're at in the building, etc it would be very much appreciated. Many thanks.

Doug Menadue C/- 13 Lisbon Court
KERWIN 4817.



Dear GR Readers,

It has been 13 years since I last asked for (and received) your help in finding a little space in the country to borrow for a while. Since then a lot has happened and now we are lucky to have our very own 25 acres. We are in our early 30s and have paid for our property on a fruit picker's wage. So yes, **DREAMS ARE POSSIBLE**. It just takes a bit of time and sacrifice and keeping that dream alive. We are still picking eight months of the year (citrus) and are also putting in small crops for ourselves as there would be nothing better than being able to work from home. As a sideline we are establishing a nursery and wish to specialise in exotic tropical/subtropical fruit trees. We also wish to grow other trees, preferably unusual or somehow unique. Our problem lies in **OBTAINING SEEDS** and this is where I ask for your help, especially those of you from tropical/subtropical areas. We are not looking for a freebie and are willing to pay for these and will more than likely want a fresh supply every year. Even if you have only one species which you may think will interest us, please write. We are also seeking bushtucker plants for the nursery. I name a few trees here we would like seeds for, but there are probably a 100 others we would like, and probably some that you may know but we've never heard of. These are just a few examples: durian, wampi, canistel, white sapote, wax jambu, tamarind, green sapote, Chinese raisin tree, sapodilla, sweetsop, soursop, rambutan, mangosteen, pumello, mabolo, longan, jabotica, breadfruit, etc. Also would like some information on where to obtain or how to propagate your own rootstocks. For example, trifoliate for citrus, can you use any lemon seed or must it be from a selected tree? Anyone knowledgeable in this area please write. Feel free to write even if you can't help us with any of the above. It is always good to exchange ideas.

Is there anyone out there who has had an operation on their hands for **CARPAL TUNNEL** and would they recommend it? Does anyone know of any relief or anything else that may help without resorting to this operation? I need my hands right now, but they are killing even as I write this letter. We still have holes to dig, fences to build, thousands of nails to hammer, fruit to pick, letters to write. Help!! Thanks for a great mag from a one loyal reader.

Monica, Greg, Keegan (13) and Tristan (2),
500 Moolboolaman Rd, GIN GIN 4671.

Monica, have a look through Feedback letters in the previous few issues. We have had many comments/suggestions re carpal tunnel. However, it's always safest to consult a qualified practitioner in your preferred modality.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Help! I'm immersed in a demoralising apathy and almost **TERMINAL TEDIUM** and I need some vicarious experiences to pull me out. Relocation away from family and friends, a debilitating car accident, and the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' have laid me low, not to mention Ross River fever.

I've always had an open and inquiring mind and been an active person. Over the years I've been involved in station life in Western Queensland, mountain life and seaside living, rodeos, pony clubs and our own riding school, lots of creative stuff and cooking and sewing, governessing (I'm a teacher), animals (lots - all types), gardening, child-rearing, and many different jobs, city and country. I've travelled a lot. I'm a voracious reader of magazines (GR is tops!) and nonfiction books. I've studied philosophy and educational psychology. I like the early Buddhist teachings and I think Carl Jung was on the right track. I've dived into New Age literature, am interested in social reforms and alternative lifestyles. I like the concept of permaculture and I think we should be embracing holistic medicine. I love being around artistic and creative people, and I love tribal music. And I've lost my 'zing'!!

So, if you're doing, thinking or being anything interesting, let me know. I need to feel energised enough to get my life moving again. In return, I'll be enthusiastic and encouraging (if it's not something wacky, bigoted or criminal), and will write to you. If we really strike a common chord, we may be able to meet up. I'm a young 63, look like Margaret Fulton and am a fair cook. I love to share dialogue and perhaps a cuppa with interesting people, male or female, young or old, from any walk of life.

Margaret,

26 Oleander Drive, BRIBIE ISLAND 4507.

Dear Megg, Mary & Readers,

I was thrilled with the story you published on my crafts and the pictures came out quite well. Also, thanks to all those readers who wrote for my craft book. Please be patient, you'll receive your copies soon. The delay has been caused by the third massive stroke my husband had in October and I needed to be by his side for reassurance. Has anyone heard of the drug called **PLAVOX** that prevents strokes? Where would you get it? Is there a naturopath among the readers that can tell me what to put in my left eye that oozes out mullock all the time because of a blocked tear duct? The same eye has a tear in the retina. The doctors won't operate because I have an irregular heartbeat and am 82 years of age.

In my last letter I asked readers did they have a book that they didn't need for my Breville Kitchen Wizz and within a fortnight one arrived by post from a reader. I was overwhelmed at her generosity, so I posted her one of my books. And, just last month, I got another letter from Tea Tree, Tasmania, offering me another. *Grass Roots* is widely read.

My garden is an absolute picture. I get dozens of catalogues sent to me from nurseries far and wide and because I love rare plants, I can't resist sending for them. I have more than a dozen different colours of dwarf bearded iris, but the beloved white one died. Has any reader got the white I could swap one of mine with? My favourite flowers are white and black and I have lots of both. For many years I have been seeking a (blue) *Campanula isophylla*. I have the white and when I was a child my mother called it the Star of Bethlehem.

Marjorie Bligh,

163 Madden St, DEVONPORT 7310.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Folks,

I recently bought a stack of back issues from a garage sale and got so engrossed I decided to buy the latest copy. It seems that the issue of **WOMEN WANTING TO TRAVEL AUSTRALIA ALONE** is a recurrent one, so for Yvonne Everingham and any other women considering it, here's my two cent's worth. I am a musician and earn my living from touring. This means I'm often on the road, alone, for weeks at a stretch. The most pressing issue for me is personal safety and I have found the best method of achieving personal safety is with a large, well-trained dog. I've never been harassed, or even wolf-whistled (no pun intended) when I have my dog with me. However, when I haven't, it's been quite another story. Leering rednecks with hopeful expressions seem to magically appear at roadside rest areas when the dog's not around. Disadvantages of travelling with a dog are that you can't take them to national parks, most alternative communities and many caravan parks. Also, some people seem most horrified at the very thought that you might want to bring a dog to their house. I ask those people to consider the very real risks women travelling alone face. However, it's not all doom and gloom. 'Life Be in it' publish a very useful directory of dog-friendly campsites, caravan parks, B&Bs etc—called *Holidaying with Dogs*. Also worth checking out is the range of books printed by Highwayman Productions, PO Box 229, Oaklands Park, SA 5046. These detail free campsites throughout Australia. State forests are open to all campers and dogs are not prohibited, but care must be taken that your pet does not hassle wildlife.

Before I draw fire from those who believe it is a sin to take a dog to the bush, may I point out that dingos are dogs and have been part of the native Australian landscape for millennia. There's no reason why a dog should have an adverse effect on the bush if properly controlled and cleaned up after; no more than us with our cars, cans and campfires, anyway. It's a perfectly natural act for a woman travelling alone in this country to take a dog with her for protection and company. If you don't believe me, read your Dreamtime legends

I feel a largish placid breed such as a Labrador is best as they are easy to train, fairly lazy, big enough to be impressive, but cute enough to win over dubious hosts, and protective without being likely to bite the wrong person. They're also patient with kids. My Lab-Kelpie cross has provided me with companionship and protection for six years and jumps in the front of the car as soon as he sees me packing. Another handy hint for people travelling with dogs: did you know you can take your dog with you as baggage on domestic flights? You have to hire a crate from the airline and may have to pay an excess baggage fee, depending on the weight of your dog. Care should be taken when taking southern dogs into tropical areas as they will have no immunity to ticks that can kill them. I use Frontline Top Spot, which is a yukky chemical, but it's water-fast, which is an issue when your dog loves to swim as much as mine does. If anyone wants any further advice about travelling with dogs, feel free to write.

PS: another good book is *A Guide to Free Camping in WA*, available from PO Box 249, Dollybrook WA 6239.

**Penelope Swales,
PO Box 136, EMERALD 3782.**

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

A big thank you to all the kind people who replied to my query on silverbeet growing (GR134). Upon investigation with torch and vigilant observation, I decided it was earwigs causing the problems. The simplest and most effective solution was to place a plastic drink bottle over the seedlings, which acted like a mini glasshouse. As the plants grew, I cut the top out of the bottle so the leaves could harden off before removing the bottle. This worked well with lettuces and tomatoes also. I also tried growing spinach and had no trouble at all with this as it grew so fast nothing had time to eat it!

**Pauline Brooks,
HAMILTON 3300.**

Dear Folk,

Just writing to say how much we appreciate the wonderful work you all do, bringing some sanity to today's rush to be on top, no matter what.

We would like to say how much we enjoyed the DIY story on the 'Solar Dryer' by N Jackson in issue 135. It shows how everyone can get a better lifestyle without senseless waste and expense.

Also a terrific story by the same author – 'Are You Compliant?' – made us think. I tell you, we've laid in supplies and fuel, money etc. Enjoyed the humour in it as well, not often seen.

Now a query – as we have a sawmill close by, does anyone know any ideas about how to use sawdust in the garden or other uses?

**Len & Sharon Shalhoub,
'Gorge View', WOLLOMOMBI 2350.**

Stay tuned for an article from N Jackson on using sawdust in a future issue.

Dear Editors,

I have spent many frustrating hours over the years, trying to trace those fascinating articles, advertisements and letters seen in GR. While your frequently published INDEXES cover all the major articles of course, there are dozens of smaller items which fire the imagination or stimulate the juices (or itch the feet) in every issue. I have finally found my solution to 'keeping track' of everything that interests me, in every issue. I place one or more 'peel-off' temporary labels on the front covers, then write the topics and page numbers on the labels. These labels do not damage the covers.

I also mention that I have advertised in *Grass Roots* for ladies of my generation (over 60) to correspond with me from anywhere in Australia and I have discovered some remarkable new penfriends in this way.

**Tom E Trustrum,
PO Box 505, WOLLONGONG EAST 2520.**

Dear Megg and Mary,

Hello, how are you? Since 'discovering' GR at the library, my husband and I have spent many hours enjoying your most wonderful mag. In just a few months we have read every one we could get, and now – so as not to miss out on our 'fix' – we have bought our very first issue, GR 135.

As we are both living with **CHRONIC FATIGUE** and are sensitive to chemicals and many foods, it's just nice to see what your mag and other letter writers have to offer. It's been a very lonely existence since becoming ill, but since we've been reading GR, we don't feel quite so isolated. If anyone would like to write, phone or visit you are most welcome to do so.

PS: if you wish to visit, please phone first, so we can get organised.

**Terry & Liz Hawthorne,
7 Carter Place, SEATON 5023.
Ph: 08-8268-4205.**



Dear GR,

So many replies regarding softening of toenails, my way must really be the easiest. Simply soak a cottonwool bud in Dettol, dab on to toenail for a couple of seconds then cut with nail clippers. Nail will go hard again in about one minute, if this happens, just soften again and quickly cut. Try this, it really works.

To Lynette Johnson who wanted to make **PAPER LOGS**. There is a paper press that makes fire bricks from wet torn-up paper. These take about two months to dry so need to be made well in advance and you need good strength in your hand and wrist to make bricks, definitely not suited to anyone with arthritis. Can be obtained through: Innovations, Private Bag 28, Frenchs Forest NSW 1639. Cost is about \$30, plus postage. Write to them or phone 1300-303-303.

**Ros Lowrey,
Orange Spot, HOWARD 4659.**

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

I am wondering if anyone knows about or has read about **DIFFERENT NUTRIENT CONTENTS IN VEGETABLE** and fruit produce depending on the available nutrients in the original growth medium (soil). I am interested in my health and would like to find out if each individual vegetable or fruit always contains the same level of vitamins and minerals, if grown organically or on a monoculture scale. This may influence whether, for health benefits, local organic produce should be bought and consumed in preference to produce from a large chain store. Any knowledge or ideas on this issue will be gratefully received.

Belinda McNeill,

74 Narabeen Park Pde, WARRIEWOOD 2102.

There have been studies published which indicate a much increased nutrient content in organically grown food, and others which show no appreciable difference. As in all things, results can be interpreted in a number of ways. What is clear though, is that homegrown food, harvested, cooked and eaten within a short space of time will have a higher nutrient content than food which has been transported, stored and left on the shelf for an unknown time. This implies that locally grown food that reaches its final consumer in a shorter time than does food transported over long distances will be of higher nutrient content.



Dear GR Readers,

Thank you all for your **LETTERS AND PATTERNS**. The response was wonderful, I can't keep up the replies personally. Thanks again.

Jan Clifton,

15 Boronia St, SCONE 2337.

Dear GR Readers,

Can anyone out there help me? Quite some years ago I heard about an elderly man who was a water diviner and an **ELECTRICAL DIVINER** as well. This gentleman divined (for want of a better word) natural electricity or magnetism (my memory is not great on this) that runs through the earth, through homes and out the other side. The lady telling the story told of how he first looked for tell-tale signs of shrubs/flowers up close to the house that were browned off and not growing as well as their neighbouring plants. He would put a metal rod into the ground after testing, thus sending the electrical current up and over the house to another rod on the other side. When asked what the current did to the residents, the answer was headaches, not feeling well while sitting on a chair that was in the line of the current.

My problem is that I have found that I sleep better, more refreshed and less pain, when I sleep in other beds in the house or when sleeping away from home. I suffer from CFS and fibromyalgia and have only recently remembered the above story. Looking at the garden again under the two bedrooms, the border along there always looks almost bare in the same spot each year when I plant annuals. The seedlings never take off but remain stunted. I had put this down to cutworms previously but now I am not so sure. This border area is in direct line to where the two bedrooms converge and my pillow is against this wall. As there is no other spot for the bed, I am sleeping in another room at the moment and the change to my health is a little better. (I have sprayed for dust mites by the way.)

What I need to know is whether anyone else has heard of this phenomenon, can help me find information or someone who can help. I would be very grateful for any reply.

Judy Byron,

1 Coomassie Ave, FAULCONBRIDGE 2776.

Dear Megg, Mary & The Gang,

I have been reading your great magazine for mega years now and look forward to each issue. Through life I have been collecting hints

and have devised some really good ones myself. Hopefully one day I will put them in a book and publish them and share with the public. My dream is to shift onto my own GR place and live a simpler lifestyle. At the moment I would like to **CARETAKE A PLACE IN COUNTRY** Victoria that is on a fairly busy road and has lots of good sheds, power and water. There doesn't really have to be a house as I could fix up a sound shed as living quarters for myself and my dog. I would do odd jobs around the place in lieu of rent.

Or, perhaps a place with lots of sound sheds and the above that I could buy at a later stage. It would have to have a few acres with it as I have plans to build four different alternative styles of houses on it, none of which have been built before.

I have built many different machines during my lifetime, including alternative power sources etc. I enjoy inventing and building machinery. I class myself as a 'thinker', 'inventor', and a 'doer'. But I don't do drugs, tobacco or alcohol and am not into religion. At the moment I am thinking and re-inventing a specialised mud brick press as one of my house ideas will have mud brick on the inside of the outside walls simply to help with insulation. I like mud brick, not only for its looks but its great insulation values.

I have thoughts also on building a tile making machine to make red gum tiles as the clear finishes available now are so durable as far as wear is concerned. I saw red gum tiles on the floor of a kitchen some years ago. They looked really beaut but had to be stripped and resealed quite often because no suitable floor sealer could be found at the time.

I can share my thoughts to help others develop their ideas if they feel they need some help. I'm only a stamp and a piece of paper away. I enjoy the thought process and the time involved in solving most problems. My long-term aim is to be involved with a publication or magazine that is totally devoted to this type of activity. I could be writer and problem solver, part owner or complete owner. It's only a dream at the moment as it hasn't happened, but maybe some day.

I'm glad to see that you reached your 25th year milestone. I can't wait to see what it will look like after 50 years.

My kindest regards to all at GR Magazine and all fellow readers.

Ian Webb,

12 Whipstick Rd, EAGLEHAWK 3556.

Dear GR,

Is there someone who would just **LIKE A CHANCE** to live on a rural property with pleasant surroundings for no or low rent? We have separate shower/laundry facilities available. Would prefer if person had own caravan, though one could be arranged if needed. In return we are asking for a helping hand a couple of hours a day on a small nut farm and apiary. Looking for n/r, n/s honest active person/s. We could give it a go for a timeframe of six months to see how things go. We are a family who have made the move to the country 12 years ago, enjoy the lifestyle, though we would appreciate a little help. So it would be a win/win situation. We are open to suggestions. Has anyone out there attempted this sort of venture before? What was their experience?

M & T Richards,

RMB 2231 Ferris St, VIA STRATHMERTON 3641.



Dear GR,

I came across an article called 'Your Moon Chart For Gorgeous Hair & Smooth Skin', but my question is: can anyone tell me what's a **WAXING MOON** in a 'fertile' zodiac sign? *Ringing for a chart can be costly and maybe I can work it out for myself with a little help. Thank you. I wish your mag was 10 times as thick so I can have a read for a few days instead of one - can't get enough of it.

Angela,

776 Spit Rd, MOSMAN 2088.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

Would anyone know a home **REMEDY FOR SCABIES**? Scabies are very nasty, caught god knows where, and quickly spread through the family. Treatment via the chemist is very costly. A small 30 g tube of ointment is \$14.95. An adult needs two, a child one. Then everyone has to be treated for a second time to get rid of the horrible pest. So for a family of five – two (large) adults, and three children – 14 tubes are needed at a cost of \$209.30.

I haven't been able to find a less costly home cure anywhere, just in case it happens again. What did they use in the 'old days' before all the modern medicines? There must have been something, but what was it?

J Fleming,
544 Green Gully Rd, MUDGEE 2850.

Dear Grass Roots,

What a wonderful and enlightening magazine. Look forward to each publication knowing it will always enrich our lives. I am looking for a magazine (book!) which was advertised several years ago in your mag. **'FURNITURE FOR THE MAN WITH A CHAINSAW'**. If anyone has a copy (will re-imburse) or knows of a current outlet with this in stock would love to find it (for hubby).

Nerida Kammerev,
C/- ROELANDS PO, WA 6226.



Dear Sir/Madam,

Recently I obtained a copy of GR 121 from my local library to read the article on **ORGANIC PIG FARMING**. My wife and I have a 100 acre property just outside of Emerald, on which we have pigs. I am hoping that someone could put us in contact with Mick and Cheryl Smith, the people who featured in this article. At present we have two sows and a boar, with three pigs (two sows and one boar) approximately six months old and a further 14 piglets from two litters. It is our intention to get rid of the boars, bring in another boar to breed with the sows and bring our herd size to around 80 pigs. We are very interested in finding out more on the organic side of pig farming.

WS Pilkington,
PO Box 807, EMERALD 4720.

Dear GR Friends,

We have a few requests you may be able to help us with. In GR 80, pg 65, there were instructions for a **'PEST PROOF CAGE'** by Tonemarie of Montville, Qld. Has anyone built this with success, and how were the flowering plants pollinated? Some of our GRs we have loaned and not had returned, and in these is the info we need! Firstly, **QUANDONGS** and alternative foods – how are they grown, and where do we buy the seeds? What is **MARJORIE BLIGH'S ADDRESS**, and has anyone a price list of her books? **GRASSHOPPERS**: how do we rid ourselves of this plague that defies chickens, derris dust and treacle spray? **HOME REMEDIES** for anything and everything, to add to the ones in *Living better for Less*. Recipes for **HEALTHY BISCUITS** and slices. Does anyone have a copy of *Ithaka* by Peter Cavafy?

We know how it feels to send things to people and not receive a reply, and were delighted with those who were courteous enough to write back and say thanks.

Finally, here is a favourite quotation of ours from a poem by Henry Wordsworth Longfellow. It seems to sum up the spirit of GR.

*Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate.
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour, and to wait.*

Brigid & Julian Floreani,
'Tir Nan Og', Blue Springs Rd, GULGONG 2852.

Dear Megg & GR People,

My best wishes go out to all you dedicated people. We enjoy the magazine so much and I devour it at one sitting. My husband and I are both well since his retirement and are still living in suburbia, although we are in a semi-rural area with five-acre farms around I still get plenty of hints from *Grass Roots*.

Therese Powe,
9 Kerstin Crt, ROCHEDALE SOUTH 4123.

Dear GRs,

TINS OF FRUIT are usually about half-full of 'syrup' which is basically a mixture of sugar, water and some fruit juice. Most people I know just toss this syrup down the sink, but in fact you've paid for that liquid at the rate of about \$2 per kilo, or the same rate as the tinned fruit. The syrup can be poured into a drinking mug and stored in the fridge until you need a marinade for a tasty Asian stir-fry, or you can use it on your indoor plants for an odourless fertiliser. Of course it works on outside plants as well, especially green-leaved vegies. Back in the kitchen, you can use it whenever you need or would normally use sugar and give your cuppa a certain *je ne sais quoi*. When cooking some 'nightshade' types of vegies which can sometimes be a bit on the sour or bitter side, such as tomatoes, egg-plant/aundergine and zucchini/courgette, add some of the syrup and the balance of taste will be restored.

It pays to **SHOP AROUND** when you are building or renovating your house. The old advice to get three quotes at least can save you heaps. A recent example: For a plastic drainpipe fitting a DWV 50 mm push-on-cap. On 11 August 1999 Coffs Plumbing Supplies quoted \$2.10, Reece Plumbing Supplies \$3.35, Tradelink Plumbing Supplies quoted \$6.78 each. This is fairly typical of everything from roof tiles to nails, and can vary weekly. So, just as you are about to buy something, get some quotes. Your phone bill may go up a couple of hundred dollars, but you can usually save thousands. For big quotes, say for labour or materials over \$500, it pays to write a letter and receive back a letter with the quote on paper.

Roberino,
Lot 4, ARRAWARRA BEACH 2456.

Dear Readers,

I am trying to find out ways of **PROCESSING HERBS**. I have just started a herb garden and would like to know how to make my own lavender oil, how to make a syrup from the borage flower etc. If anyone could help me with any information it would be greatly appreciated.

Lee Hunter,
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Dear GRs,

DROP EVERYTHING AND COME. Do land blocks from \$1k, Goodlife Island homes from \$25k, and fireproof kit homes for \$15k turn y'all on? Or masses of tropical fruit winter-ripening in edible jungle gardens, abounding rare wildlife, crystal fresh tank and ground water, rampant wetlands and rainforest, a ready source of WWOOFers, warm swimming water (bay or fresh), plenty of stove wood and colossal free solar/wind power potential? I have not had to visit a doctor for 14 years! Supportive like-minded green island folk only a \$3 ferry hop from mainland Redland Bay – albeit not nearly enough – are into renewables and sustainables and conservatibles whilst helping save these gorgeous simple islands for posterity from some heavy negative development forces. As pensioners we have no vested interest whatsoever. So feel free to come look us over, inspect our 150-odd ingeniously simple sustainable life-support systems or we'll be happy to provide info via 07-3409-5100, if not by SAE letter.

Pat & Lucy,
BackYard Tech, Cone St, MACLEAY ISLAND 4184.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR & Readers,

At last, at last, a letter from someone who has devoured nearly each and every GR ever printed, been inspired and enlightened for as long as I remember. Thank you all so much!

I have nearly always lived in the country on other people's properties, treated them as my own, renovated, built, painted, sweated, turned them into something lovely to live in, and then of course needed to move on. I don't regret the experience and my children were right there with me (32, 28 & 25 and a nine year old now), but something has happened now which some GR friends may have discovered too. I have a deposit of \$5000 for a little piece of my own earth – basically doesn't matter what it really is, even if my son (the littlest hero) and I need to caravan it or shed live. Because I am 49 years old, the bank acknowledges that my credit rating is fine but, as a single applicant, my earning years seem to only be 11 to 16 years more, so I guess that is the life-span of repayment they envisage. Of course this is a sad reality, even though I know I'm ageless, tireless, hard-working, can operate machinery, have a rigger's certificate, am a competent youth worker with assured income, and can survive with the basics. Aside from finding a 'young' partner instantly – which is ridiculous (purely for bank purposes) and which I won't consider – I don't have many options. I wonder if anyone has had this experience and has **VENDOR FINANCED** a person such as myself? A little piece of earth to own isn't just a pipe dream, is it? If anyone is interested or has advice, please write.

Jo Hofskink,

PO Box 706, BRIDGETOWN 6255.



Dear Mary,

In GR 134 I can answer a couple of questions. From Rachel Moran: Growing **GOOSEBERRIES** from seeds can take up to seven years to produce fruit, but plants are available from New Gippsland Seed Farm, PO Box 1, Silvan Victoria 3795, ph: 03-9737-9560.

Jodie: **MOZZIE ZAPPERS** do give off chemicals. The only supplier of **WOOD CHIP HEATERS** is a Ray Williams from Gunnadoo NSW just out of Canberra. He's advertised in GR from time to time.

S Robertson: **MALARIA**: Drink sage tea instead of tea or coffee. Pure lemon juice and honey every two hours as often as the patient can drink it conveniently for fever, pains, shivering fits. Seek medical advice. Herbal recipe: 25 g boneset, 28 g Peruvian bark chip, 14 g quassia chips, 28 g sage, 28 g skullcap, 56 g yarrow. Mix the herbs and add them to 1363 ml of water; simmer for 15 minutes. When cool, administer a wine-glassful every two hours. This is from *The Concise Herbal Encyclopedia* by Donald Law.

Pauline E Brooker: **SILVER BEET** problems are either grasshoppers or earwigs that eat the plants down. Several different types of birds such as magpies and kurrawongs do a good job on it too.

Colin Law,

C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Dear GRs,

To all the kind hearted people who responded to my plea about **MY DAUGHTER'S ASTHMA**, please give yourselves a pat on the back. Thank you so much to each of you. I am pleased to say she has improved. There are so many new things to try for the illness, there is no one cure. I wish I had been reading this magazine when she was smaller, when all the doctors wanted to do was pump in the drugs. You can't blame them, I guess they can't be miracle workers, but the letters I received are proof that people really do care, and the best part is they care for no cash payment but because they truly want to help others. Thank you.

Sharon Ingersoll,

41 Zee St, MAITLAND 2320.

Dear GR Readers,

We are an original GR-reading couple who look forward to our regular read of like-minded knowledge and interests. We live in Tresco Vic just 25 kilometres from Swan Hill – the heart of fruit growing area. As we are both retired we will be **MOVING TO AVOCA** to be in easier travelling distance of Melbourne to facilitate medical services and family visits.

The type of property we are looking for would be up to \$80,000, house, 4 to 10 acres, town water, shedding and electricity. We would love to hear from anyone, especially GR readers from the Avoca/Maryborough (Vic) locale re water quality, local politics, rates, or anything good or bad about the area. Of course our little patch of self-sufficiency will have to go on the market early next year. We would be only too happy to reply to all letters. Hopefully, next year these grey-powered Grass Rooters will be uprooting pigeons, hens, recycled goodies etc to start a new walk into the sunset.

John & Lesley Ardron,
PO Box 341, LAKE BOGA 3584.



Dear GR People,

I need help! I need some **WALNUT HUSKS** to make a wood stain, and walnut trees do not grow in this district. I do not need the nut, just the green (or old black) husks that envelop the nut on the tree. It does not matter a great deal if the husks are quite old. If anyone could send me a dozen or so husks I will gladly pay the postage and whatever cost the sender thinks is a fair thing. I would also be happy to make up a quantity of the stain, called *broue de noix*, to send to the sender if they so wish.

My other request is for a plan or description of a mud/stone/brick **WOOD-FIRED OVEN**. Such ovens were very common in Europe, particularly in Mediterranean countries. I bake our bread in our electric oven and every now and again in my camp oven in the backyard. The camp oven bread is so mouth watering that it seldom lasts more than an hour, ten minutes if the kids or grandkids are about! Unfortunately, the camp oven only bakes one loaf and sometimes it draws some old-fashioned looks from the neighbours when I light two small fires in the backyard. In fact, I have been told it is an offence to do so. If I can get a plan for an oven I will scale it down to hold half a dozen loaves and build it on a trolley so it can be wheeled to storage.

Bob Hollis,
20 Hocken St, NORTH MACKAY 4740.

Dear Grass Roots,

First, please let me say how much I enjoy reading your magazine – especially Feedback. I'm 43, married, with two daughters ages 24 & 21, and a son of 13. I originated from the south of England, emigrating with my parents in 1969. It really seems like I'm stuck in a rut at the moment – lacking energy, motivation, and with very little money to spare. I'd love to hear from any readers with similar interests to mine which include: reading (a broad range of books, including archaeology and history), handicrafts, gardening and genealogy. I'd also like to know more about Feng Shui. Would anyone know where I can obtain **ARROWROOT PLANTS/TUBERS**?

Here's a hint from an old organic market gardener. For anyone trying to grow **PEST-FREE BROCCOLI**, cabbages, caulies etc, plant stinging nettles between the rows. I've seen it working – not a bug or caterpillar in sight, and the young nettles can be cooked in a similar way to spinach. Nettles also make a very good iron-rich tonic for us and our plants and a marvellous hair rinse (supposed to be a hair restorer). Any unwanted plants can be composted.

For **RELIEF FROM SHINGLES**, rub in pure honey. It worked really well for a good friend of mine. (Wear an old singlet or T-shirt as it is rather sticky.)

Helen Stark,
MS 918, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Hi Guys,

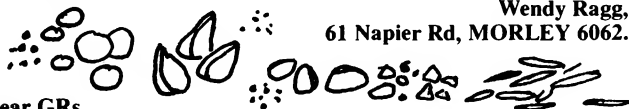
I write to ask if GR readers can help me with preparations for an **ADVENTURE AROUND AUSTRALIA** or parts thereof. I am in the planning stages at this point and would welcome any thoughts or experiences from others, such as types of vehicles used and the advantages/disadvantages as I will be travelling by myself with two small dogs for companionship. My thoughts at the moment are to buy a station wagon (or similar) and attach a camp-trailer, thus leaving me free to sightsee whilst not having to strike camp.

With this in mind, where are some great places to go with two such companions (knowing that they will not be welcomed everywhere)? What and where should I avoid and what are the best times of year for being in certain areas?

As regards supporting myself – I have a certificate in second level reiki, sacred huna massage and can perform ear candling if required, as well as teach others how to make labyrinth cloths which are used to help with meditation and personal insights. On the mainstream side, I have lots of office and minimal computer experience.

I thank all your wonderful readers in advance and pledge to answer all letters if they desire. Thank you all.

Wendy Ragg,
61 Napier Rd, MORLEY 6062.



Dear GRs,

Rachel Moran, **GOOSEBERRY SEEDS**. Perhaps the Seed Savers' Network could help you. You can contact them on 02-6685-6624, or fax 02-6685-6624, or write to: PO Box 975, Byron Bay 2481. New Gippsland Seeds and Bulbs also advertise that they have many old and unusual seeds. They can be contacted on 03-9737-9560, or fax: 03-9737-9292, PO Box 1, Silvan 3795.

John of Wodonga, **WINDMILLS**. There are a couple of places you could contact. First there is the Rainbow Power Company, 1 Alternative Way, Nimbin, NSW 2480, ph: 02-6689-1430, fax: 02-6689-1109. Email: rpcltd@nor.com.au. Website: <http://www/rpc.com.au>. You could also try the Alternative Technology Association, Level 2, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000. Tel: 03-9650-7883, fax: 03-9650-8574.

G Vella, **CHEMICALLY FREE COMMUNITY**. I've heard that Kangaroo Island, off South Australia, is quite chemical free, but the down side is that it's probably quite an isolated existence being that it is an island.

Mrs Doris Mintern, **YURTS**. The place to contact is: Goulburn Yurtworks, 12 Copford Road, Bradford, Goulburn 2580. Ph: 02-4821-5921, fax: 02-4821-6999.

Jenny from Glebe: To find out more about **COMMUNITIES OR ECO-VILLAGES** you need to contact: Max Lindeggar at Crystal Waters Co-op, MS 16, Maleny 4552. General enquiries should be put in writing and accompanied by a large self-addressed envelope. Please also include the cost of return postage. Ph: 07-5494-4741, fax: 07-5494-4578. Email: lindeggar@gen-oceania.org. Website: <http://www.gaia.org>.

Mrs P Kavanagh: For **UNUSUAL BULBS AND RARE SPECIES** you could try: Broesen Seeds and Bulbs, 365-367 Monbulk Road, Silvan 3795, ph: 03-9737-9560. Phoenix Seeds, PO Box 207, Snug 7054, ph: 03-6267-9663. Kings and Exclusive Seeds, PO Box 975, Penrith 751. Heritage Seed Curators Assoc, PO Box 1450, Bairnsdale 3875, ph: 03-5153-1034.

L Brown wanted to know about a plan for attaching a **MANUAL FLOUR MILL** to a bicycle. This is a long shot but the distributors of the Retsel Flour Mill may be able to help you. Their address is: PO Box 712, Dandenong 3175. You might have to send an SAE or you could phone on 03-9795-2725. If he doesn't know, you could try the Retsel Corporation at PO Box 47, McCammon, Idaho 83250, USA. Alternatively, you could contact Going Solar in Melbourne. They may have some ideas.

Karen Fiala,
36 Intrepid Dr, MERMAID WATERS 4218.

Howdy GR Folks,

I brought your No 133 recently for the first time, but not the last. On reading Feedback I noticed a couple of letters where I have had some experience in their problems and I would like to share my knowledge in overcoming them.

ABOUT CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME which I was diagnosed with in 1997: The orthopaedic surgeon I saw wanted me to sign to go under the knife, which I put off. I was lent a magazine which contained an article about vitamin B6 and carpal tunnel syndrome. My CTS was brought on while washing dishes as a kitchen-hand which I did for 18 months. Once diagnosed with CTS, I took two tablets daily of Nature's Own B6 100 mg. I continued to wash dishes and while taking B6 tablets I didn't get CTS. I have changed jobs and no longer take B6 and I don't suffer from CTS.

ASTHMA: I have been an asthmatic since my childhood. In August 1997, I went **VEGAN**. I have since stopped using Becatide and have had no use for my Ventolin since stopping taking dairy products and meat.

Also in a magazine, *New Vegetarian and Natural Health*, available in most newsagents, in the back is a list of books from the Natural Health Society bookshop. One which is listed may be of use. It's called, *Overcome Asthma*, by I Sinclair, and costs \$25.50 to members of Natural Health, Vegetarian Vegan Societies. For enquiries contact: Natural Health Society, 28/541 High Street, Penrith, NSW 2750. Ph: 02-4721-5068.

Ashley Fissenden,
18 Mark Court, LAVERTON 3028.

Thanks for the tips Ashley. We do, however, urge readers with health problems to consult a practitioner before undertaking any treatment. Even 'natural' modalities can cause problems if incorrectly used.

Dear GR & Readers,

I am eighteen years old. I live in a small town in the north of Tasmania. I have always wanted to **TRAVEL THE MAINLAND** of Australia working and paying my way around. I have never travelled before and I was thinking of staying in hostels or becoming a **WWOOFer**. If anyone out there has been on a journey like the one I would like to travel, I would gratefully appreciate it if you could please write or email me.

Laurella Wordsworth,
9 Jellico St, BEAUTY POINT 7270.
Email: simplicity_no1@yahoo.com

Dear GR Readers,

I am hoping that someone may be able to help us. We are looking for plans to build a **COMPOSTING TOILET** that would meet the requirements of Bega Shire Council. Or else we would like to buy a second-hand loo from anyone. We also need any info or designs of successful kitchen/shower/laundry **GREY WATER SYSTEMS**.

Paul & Sharon Harrison,
20 Joseph St, WOONONA 2517.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

My wonderful partner and I have finally found our little piece of **HEAVEN IN THE BRISBANE VALLEY** area. We will be building on it in the very near future and our dream is to lead a very simple lifestyle and to be as self-sufficient as possible. But we need some help. If there are any readers who would be willing to share their own experiences, hints or tips as well as any recipes for soap making, preserving fruits etc or jam, butter, chutney, relish making, or basically any recipes that you would be willing to share, as we wish to be as self-sufficient as possible? I would be happy to reply to any readers who would be willing to share their information and experiences.

Kelly Wilson,
421 Hume St, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

Kelly, for \$5 and an SAE, GR supplies a set of photocopied soap making recipes.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grass Roots,

It's a sad face I have after I've finished reading each edition of GR and knowing there are seven weeks until the next one! I love the wealth of information from the Feedback letters. Great magazine. My dream of owning some land has now become a reality and even though it's sometimes hard when you're by yourself I am eternally grateful to friends and neighbours who help in so many ways. Several times I have returned home to find some task I can't do has been done by a friend down the road. So, many thanks to Barry Bird. A privilege to know you.

After travelling in Canada, USA and Peru I really changed my outlook on life. In the Peruvian highlands those that were the **POOREST TENDED TO OFFER THE MOST** with no strings attached. Setbacks meant finding another approach and stress was not in their dictionary. I would thoroughly recommend a visit if you're comfortable with the backpacking idea. The food I thought was fantastic and healthy, especially after being in the States. The only downside is carrying your own toilet paper.

In response to an article on the prickly pear GR 132, in southern USA, the prickles are burnt off the fruit while still on the plant, then picked and handled easily.

I have a sloping block which is shale/clay on the top half and have been building the garden beds with horse manure/sawdust (have a free supply) and have covered it in sugar cane mulch. Some plants have gone straight into this and do great – pawpaw, salvias, basil, parsley, and not so good for others, but what should be added to balance this?

Has anyone successfully grown *Morinda citrifolia* (Tahitian noni) from seed? I'm having trouble with the seedlings getting a brown spot on the stem that slowly rots through the stem and kills the plant. I'm not sure of the correct soil to use, as my seedlings that sprouted in March are quite dormant at present (only two remain now). Something has eaten my two big healthy patches of parsley, left the stems. Would a hare, possum or bandicoot have done this? Any deterrent you can suggest?

I bought some **OVAL BUCHU** (*Agathosma crenulata*) seeds and cannot find any information on them. They are a medicinal herb. If anyone has any information I would be most grateful.

Finally, to everyone that contributes, a big thank you for helping broaden my knowledge.

Deb Cox,

85 Coomera Valley Dr, GUANABA 4210.

Dear GR,

I am writing to see whether any readers would be interested in buying the following GR publications: *The Early Years*, issues 6 to 58 (only to be sold together), *Family Book*, *Fireside Reader*.

All items are in excellent order with no pieces cut out. I have enjoyed them all, but need to conserve space now and would be interested in a fair offer.

Mrs J McKinnon,

PO Box 173, WONTHAGGI 3995.



Dear GR,

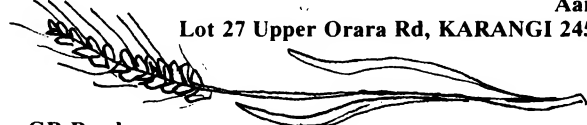
Recent enquiries concerning **FOX CONTROL**: Foxes can wreak havoc with inadequately housed domestic animals. In 1988/89, I worked at Taronga Zoo (Sydney) and was witness to a number of bizarre slayings of exhibits. Whole cages of small mammals or birds were decapitated overnight! These events were traced to foxes living in the adjacent Sydney Harbour National Park. They were able to squeeze through holes as small as 12 centimetres diameter (leaving a few traces of fur on the broken wire netting). In rabies-endemic areas of the world (including eastern Europe), foxes also pose a threat to human health. For the past

decade, some research has concentrated on controlling foxes with baits containing proteins that can provoke an immune reaction, and ultimately induce sterility (in males). CSIRO is investigating similar approaches to the control of other feral animals.

But the bottom line is that foxes destroy small animals. In areas where rabbit calicivirus has been effective, foxes are more prone to prey on native animals and domestic poultry. Killing foxes, by whatever means now available, can 'save' many other animals in the long term.

Aarn,

Lot 27 Upper Orara Rd, KARANGI 2450.



Dear GR Readers,

Recently, I have started taking an interest in **GROWING OUR OWN WHEAT, OATS AND CEREALS**, and ask if any of your readers are able to tell me how to prepare and make rolled oats and pearl barley. Is there any information regarding the stone suited to home milling of grains and who sells them, in both stone and steel? My husband is an engineer and very clever and enjoys making devices for me.

Maree Cooper,

14 Bristow St, LAURA 5480.

Dear Readers,

I would like all readers interested in **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING** to read my story. In 1997, an American naturopathic researcher, published his scientifically proved findings about the connection between blood groups and the relation to acid and alkaline foods/drinks.

I had over fifty years of symptoms and pain. My life was unbearable. No doctor and none of the different medications I took helped. I looked for help everywhere.

Then I started (November 1997) with this revolutionary blood group plan and after four months my symptoms, side effects from medications, and the permanent pain, had gone. After six months there were no asthma, arthritis, bloating, gases, indigestion, belching, heartburn, fluid retention, headaches, poor circulation and lots more, anymore. I felt like new born!

I'd like to share this with all of you sufferers. I am so thankful to this doctor and his father, also a doctor, for publishing their proofs. If anyone wants to be healthy like me, get in touch with: ROKRO, PO Box 764, Altstonville 2477.

They will send you all the information material. I am so happy that I did this programme and will keep doing it for the rest of my life.

Mary Roeschies,
BALLINA.

Dear Grass Roots,

We have had many pleasant experiences being a Willing Workers Host (WWOOF) and thoroughly recommend the organisation to hosts and would-be-travellers young and old. Hearing of 'great places' that our **WWOOFers** have been enthused us and we too dream of a working/learning holiday.

We keep in contact with our past WWOOFers and some have returned, but we would also like to make additional arrangements with people closer to home who could return on a repeated basis and, having 'learnt our routine', could allow us to venture away from home knowing our birds and plants were in capable hands. If you are a frustrated city-based person/couple/family who would appreciate free holidays in our caravan and annexe in exchange for learning about permaculture and rural existence please write. Glenlyon is situated between Kyneton and Daylesford, an hour's drive north-east of Melbourne.

Marilyn Tulloch,
RMB 3710, GLENLYON 3461.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

Here's a small re-useable hint. The **LEFTOVER FAT OR OIL** you cook with can be sponged into old newspaper. Several single pieces scrunched up will clean your pan or pot – keep you drain from clogging – and is a wonderful fire starter for your wood stove or fireplace.

**Jane Brooks,
Box 37, OLINDA 3788.**

Kirawin Cottage, Mountain Creek Rd, YASS 2582.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for your informative magazine. Do any readers have a recipe for **LYE SOAP**?

**Mrs Josephine Pattison,
PO Box 148, GULGONG 2852.**

Dear GR,

I like your magazine a lot, and hope one day to use a lot more of the useful information, when I get that dream plot of (probably) cheap, degraded land to permaculturise. I'm not sure if these pages get used much for what I'm after, but I'd really like to track down my long-lost uncle. He's changed address from South Australia, where I visited him.

His name is **ERIC ROBERT MOORE** and I guess he's in his fifties or so. I've only met him a couple of times in my life, but during the few days we spent together at his little cottage in **BIRD-WOOD**, South Australia, I felt we had a fair bit in common. Eric is my late mother's brother and their side of the family is a mystery to me. I'd like to know more, or just find Eric to know how he is. If anyone could help I'd be very happy. He may well have left Australia, but any news would be news!

**Vicki Boxell,
48 Lefroy Rd, BEACONSFIELD 6162.**

Dear GR Friends,

You are a Godsend! I've been feeling down in the dumps and have been going to the library to borrow books. I've just discovered GR and am humbled that so many kind people like you are willing to share and help others. I **WISH TO BE SELF-EMPLOYED**. Do you have ideas/projects/information/samples for a small business? Please contact me. I'll reply. Thank you.

**Helen Low,
PO Box 720, NORTH MELBOURNE 3051.**

Dear Grass Roots,

My boyfriend and I are hoping to **PURCHASE A TIPI** in the near future and would like to get any feedback from people who live/have lived in tipis – pros/cons etc. Eventually we hope to be building a home out of mud, hay – whatever. Anything on tipis will be much appreciated! Also any info on tanning with animal skins.

**Tina,
28 Woodlands Cres, NARRE WARREN 3805.**

Dear Megg and Mary,

In GR 132 there was an article on **SMOKING FOOD**. I borrowed a book from the library on the subject. Unlike your article, the author stated to only use sawdust from hardwood trees, bluegum and a few others being the exception. Could anyone clarify?

The **'SHARPENING TOOLS'** article in the latest GR forgot to mention three things: TCT blades can only be sharpened with a diamond slip-stone, although they do not need sharpening very often. After working extensively with pine, tools can get gummed up with resin, making them appear blunt even if sharpened. Clean off with oven cleaner, taking all the usual precautions. To make knives really sharp, after going over the oilstone, put the knife over a leather strop. Move only away from the blade side, otherwise you will cut into the leather. To make a strop see the Bushcraft series of books by Ron Edwards.

**Alex Cranford,
217 Pine St, HAY 2711.**

Dear GR Folk,

I would like some information regarding **KOJI**, a mould used in making miso. Is it possible to make koji at home, or purchase it in the Geelong area? My second query is to do with **SUNFLOWER SEEDS**. Is there any easy way to shell these seeds? Any information pertaining to my questions would be much appreciated.

**Jim Calic,
3 Thrums Crt, HAMLYN HEIGHTS 3215.**

Dear Grass Roots,

I have a long-time interest in **MAKING MY OWN SHOES**. Can anyone recommend any books or references that will get me started? Also, are there any courses that are run on shoe making (preferably in NSW)?

**Toni Lackey,
Kirawin Cottage, Mountain Creek Rd, YASS 2582**



Dear Vince & GR,

Re: Page 61, issue 134. Please note that the **ORANGE WATTLE** (*Acacia saligna*) is a major environmental weed all through the reserves and roadsides of Sydney. It was planted by the Road and Traffic Authority to stabilise the road edge. It grows very aggressively to the detriment of indigenous acacias.

**Alan Cook, Bush Regenerator,
7/230 Coogee Bay Rd, COOGEE 2034.**

Dear Grass Roots,

While visiting our eldest daughter in Mount Isa we were introduced to your magazine and were amazed at the amount of reading and information to be had. A lot of my time was spent in copying out the hints into a note book. I was very pleased to read about dog itch.

When our daughter saw how pleased we were she went out and bought two copies of the latest issue, one for us and one for herself. She also sent away for a years subscription for me for Fathers Day.

Now I wonder if anyone can help me. About forty years ago I was given a few seeds of lettuce. You couldn't buy them. It was a small compact variety with rather pointed leaves and was only about eight centimetres in diameter. We had it for years and then one year for some reason or other didn't keep any seeds. It was called **TONGUE LETTUCE** up here.

**Robt Winterburn,
8 Loves Lne, Rosslea, TOWNSVILLE 4812.**

Dear GRs,

Various ideas for **ORGANIC HYDROPONICS** are being tested in Brisbane by The Urban Agriculture Network's Western Pacific Office. The tests will use a standard, two-part hydroponic nutrient as a control to make comparisons with various alternative nutrients, including worm liquor.

The tests are expected to help resolve the doubt that successful commercial organic hydroponics is merely wishful thinking by organic farming enthusiasts. Results will be reported at a hydroponic technical conference early in September 2000, being organised by the 200-member Singapore Society for Soilless Culture and the Urban Agriculture Network.

In the meantime, the researchers would be delighted to hear from anyone who has tried organic hydroponics (including aquaponics, in which fish excreta and waste fish food are converted to plant food), or who would like to have an input into one or more aspects of the project.

Contact: Geoff Wilson, Hon Executive Officer, the Urban Agriculture Network – Western Pacific Office, Brisbane, Australia. Phone +61 7 3349 1422; Fax +61 7 3343 8287. Email: fawm-pl@powerup.com.au

**Geoff Wilson,
359 Broadwater Rd, MANSFIELD 4122.**

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grass Roots,

In reply to V Payne's question about **FRUIT FLY CONTROL** (GR 134). I have tried various lures and baits without much success. You catch lots of flies, but in the meantime lots of others are busy eating your fruit. The worst outcome was when I followed advice to hang a tin of kerosene and creosote in the apple tree. After a strong wind, kero and creosote all over your tree is no joke!

The best method I have come across is to cover each piece of fruit with a paper exclusion bag. It is labour intensive, but ensures 100 percent fruit-fly-free harvest (and it is a satisfying meditative experience to make personal contact with all parts of each tree). The bags cost about 10 cents each, and so far I have reused them three years in a row on apples and stone fruits. Contact: Green Harvest, 52 Crystal Waters, MS 16, via Maleny 4552, ph: 1800-681-014.

**Janet Grevillea,
WANGI WANGI 2267.**

Dear Megg,

Could anyone please tell me how to make a **WINDMILL OUT OF A SOFT DRINK CAN?** I think you cut it in half and wire goes through the centre, but I do not know how to complete it. I am going to use them to put in my fruit trees to keep the birds away. Also, does anyone know where I could get any of the following books written by Doctor Tuesday Lobsang Rampa: *Three Lives*, *Tigerlily*, *Tibetan Sage*?

**Bill Knight,
9 Brodie Cres, CHRISTIES BEACH SA.**

Dear GRs,

I am seeking help for my family and I. We are seeking acreage on or around the **NEW ENGLAND RANGES** to pursue an alternative lifestyle. We would like rent or rent/buy about five or more acres. It doesn't have to be a house, but a suitable dwelling for my wife and I and four children (13, 12, 5, 3).

Our desire to live an alternative life is driven by the stresses put on us by our so called 'normal' way of life. My wife is being treated for depression as a result of an abused childhood. Our 'normal' life of me working six days a week just to pay the bills has not helped my wife at all.

I have been collecting GR since I was 16 (35 now) and have always had a desire to go 'bush'. I have just been put on a carer's pension to look after my wife and children, which gives us the perfect opportunity to 'escape', as it were. Our need for a change in lifestyle was magnified after reading a wonderful book called *The Celestine Prophecy*, by James Redfield which is a must-read by anyone seeking a clearer view about life and where we're headed.

I can turn my hand to many jobs, so caretaking would be considered. I have been in the construction industry since I left school.

We would like to move soon. Since my wife's depression has come to the surface, we have (with the help of *The Celestine Prophecy*) moved to a more spiritual way of looking at things.

**Wayne Gleeson,
85 Mort St, TOOWOOMBA 4350.**

Dear Megg & Mary,

A few years ago I wrote to a penfriend from your pages. We corresponded for some time and met once. She moved up to Sydney and I moved down here to Victoria. Because of confusion with boxes and bits and pieces in my house, I've lost her last letter to me with the new address. We were good mates and I miss her letters. **ROSE LEWIS**, where are you? I've lost your last letter with the Sydney suburban address. What's new? I miss hearing from you dear. Drop me a line on new postal address: RMB 5715 YARRAM 3971.

Margaret.

Dear GRs,

Hello, my name is Nuin-Tara, it's a South African name. I live at Mapleton on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland, in Queensland. I'm

seventeen and live with my parents on ten acres of rainforest. We live simply, without power of any sort and have built our own mud-brick house. I really enjoy our alternative lifestyle. I've always been home schooled which has given me lots of time to follow my many interests, some of which are: canoeing, abseiling and rock climbing, back packing, mountain biking, creative writing, drawing, basket making, playing music (African drums), singing, meeting new people, seeing new places, going to Woodford Folk Festival, and bush camping with friends.

I'm really interested in Gypsy, African and Aboriginal cultures and the natural environment, and love travelling. I want to go around Australia when I get my license, particularly north Queensland. I also want to do WWOOFing and travel overseas, experience different ethnic cultures and help save the planet. I'd really like to **CONNECT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE** with similar interests. If you would like to write to me and share your interests and hobbies, my address is below.

Yickerdee (Northern Territory Aboriginal farewell), peace and happy living.

**Nuin-Tara,
PO Box 59, MAPLETON 4560.**

Dear GR Readers,

I had a letter in Feedback 134 and have had feedback from two lovely folk. A retired nurse came around to see me and gave heaps of good advice re my knee. She also brought seedlings and other handy knick-knacks. Then I had a letter offering old recipes, one for a knee poultice and a de-gas for my dog.

Finally, after 30 years, I sought help for my knee. The specialist was horrified to hear how long ago the accident happened before I sought help. He put me in hospital within a few days and did an arthroscopy which found a torn piece of cartilage wedged between the shin bone and knee ball. He removed the scrap and filed the bones down, both had become grooved over the years. For the first time in years my leg is pain free.

Here is the recipe for de-gassing for owners who might like to try it for **PONGI PETS**. Mix to a paste: 3 good sized handfuls of white wood ash, 50 grams bi-carb soda, and a few grains of Condys crystals. Can be kept in a dry form. For my small dog I use half a teaspoon mixed in her dinner. It works lovely. Thank you my new friends.

This time I remembered to say that I love Gumnut Gossip at the front - it's the first article I read, then I hunt for Down On the Farm.

**Mary Mathews,
PO Box 300, MUNDIJONG 6123.**

Dear GR,

Thank you for the magazine. A simple question: Is there an **EASY WAY TO BAKE YOUR OWN BREAD?** I mean add water to the ingredients, put in the oven (woodstove) and take out ready to eat. Is a prepacked supply available? Perhaps readers can help.

**D Bryant,
ROCKDALE 2216.**

Dear GR Friends,

Haven't missed a copy for 10 years and I still look forward to the next. Someone borrowed my copy of *Living Better for Less*, that fabulous GR lifesaver. Unfortunately, it was borrowed permanently and apparently it's out of print. Please can anyone help? A spare copy? A copied copy?

Bigger problem: **EARWIGS**. How do I stop them getting into and under everything? Also, to my GR penfriends who are wondering why I haven't written for a while, especially Kristyna Tighe, I am now the mother of 5 (under 8). I will put pen to paper when I catch my breath.

**Louisa,
C/- Post Office, YAKANDANDAH 3749.**



FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

G'Day Grass Roots Readers,

We have been wanting to write in for ages! Here we are! My husband and I love reading GR; we get all our ideas from it. We have a couple of our suggestions for you! When growing our own **VEGIES THAT ATTRACT THE BUGS**, we put SR or plain flour on the leaves. The bug eats the flour, has a drink and it swells in their stomach and no more bugs. Now summer is here our **BABY NEEDS SHADE IN THE CAR**. We use flyscreen (scraps) cut to the shape of the car window. Sew a hem by hand or machine around it, buy sticky-backed velcro dots to attach to window and it's easy to remove and clean. We are wanting recipes on cleaning products made with natural products if you have any we would love them.

Steve & Selena,
PO Box 23, ROMA 4455.

Dear Megg & Mary,

We have sold up at Yarrambat, moved to an acre **BLOCK AT SHOREHAM**, on Westernport Bay. Our soils are heavy red to chocolate clay soils.

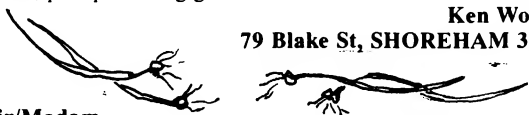
My wife Loris, of the green fingers, has lovely developing front and rear gardens of native and other shrubs and colourful flowers, all heavily mulched. Over the last three months, I have been able to keep up a supply of orchids on the front verandah and rear porch. I sense I may be running out of time on the porch, the orchids still look good, but the vegie seedlings are spreading rapidly. The morning tea table is good to pot up on, also to place seed trays on when the sun is shining.

At the rear on heavy clay soil I am working to establish the vegie patch. We considered Esther Dean style, but with the cost of lucerne and straw bales, it would have been an expensive 150 square metre garden. So to a compromise!

Soil is being dug to spade depth, weeds turned under, sprinkled with blood and bone and wood ash, broken down and raked. I have double-mulched a bale of lucerne, two bales of straw and about a bale of damp newspaper, this has been in fowl pens for about a month. This mulch will be raked into the top eight centimetres of vegie patches, then watered in and dahlia tubers, tomato seedlings and other vegies planted in this set-up. Vegie patches will be topped up with mulch as it comes from the fowl pens. We have found that dampened newspaper, when mulched, is fluffed up and breaks down rapidly in fowl pens or even direct into vegie patches.

We have found a use for onion weed: a large billy filled twice daily with weeds cut finely, then fed to fowls. Our Old English Game bantams are laying like hybrids (well better than usual) rich yolks, stong whites, high fertility, chickens growing strongly on laying mash and onion weed, plus producing green fertiliser.

Ken Woods,
79 Blake St, SHOREHAM 3916.



Dear Sir/Madam,

We, the **NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION**, would like to offer our data bank of information and resources for your magazine and readers at no cost. We feel that if we can help our members and the general public to be informed and educated about allergy/sensitivities we are fulfilling our purpose.

We are a nonprofit association and all the proceeds from our membership fees, and retail arm general store, which offers for sale (on a mail order basis) enviro/eco, safe and low allergy products, are directed back into the association to benefit the members and finance specific projects.

Our purpose is to disseminate information and educate people from the professionals to the ordinary lay person about allergies/sensitivities, food, chemicals and the environment.

Garry G French,
PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK 2150.
Ph: 04-1324-1166
Email: naaaauz@yahoo.com

To Megg & Family of GR Staff,

Hope this letter finds everyone working hard but enjoying life in general. I, like many many others who all enjoy GR from cover to cover, enjoy your magazine immensely. Having sold out in the Hunter Valley because of back problems, I'll be making the shift to a warmer climate and the change to organic growing, instead of using pesticides, insecticides and chemical fertilisers. With many thanks,

Kenneth L Barber,
PO Box 597, MUSWELLBROOK 2333.

Dear Grass Roots,

Could anyone tell me **HOW TO PRESERVE EGGS**, for later use in cooking, please. We don't like them pickled, are unable to buy sodium silicate or Kepeg. Will ordinary Vaseline do? Hoping someone can help.



Mrs Bobbye McIntosh,
18 O'Regan St, STAWELL 3380.

GR 93 contained an article about eggs, including preservation.

Dear GR Crew,

Having been a regular reader of your magazine for some 15 years, I am finally going to be able to put a lot of your ideas into practice. A friend and I have bought a 40 acre property on the NSW south coast, about 40 kilometres inland from Pambula. The property fronts the Tawamba River and I'm hoping to establish an organic market garden on the river flats. One of the things I would like to grow is asparagus, but am having trouble finding much detail on the growing and maintenance of the **ASPARAGUS BEDS**. If anyone has any info it would be most welcome. We have inherited an underground cellar that has been built into a south-facing slope. We would like to enlarge it and renew the two-door airtight system as it is not particularly efficient at present, so any ideas on this would also be appreciated. I'm hoping to finish building my shed accommodation and be a permanent dweller down there by June of next year and can see quite a few years' work ahead of me before I can get a permanent structure completed for my three year old son and myself. Would love to correspond with any readers in the area.

Sharon Adam,
46 Murramarang Rd, BAWLEY POINT 2539.

Hello GR Readers,

I've moved and nearly unpacked, finally feel as though I've come 'home'; after many years of dreaming (and reading GR) and thinking 'one day'; many years of keeping on the treadmill, the cycle of timeclocks of life. What a waste! I really did know all along where I should be and how I should really live! Why does it take so long to do what you already know inside is right? Now, it seems so simple for so much contentment. It amazes me why I didn't do this before.

Happiness doesn't mean to say I'm living with all the mod cons of life. Actually, the house is a lot along the lines of Footrot Flats! (without the tree growing in the middle), but I am working on it. The driveway is inaccessible at times of rain, so sometimes the car gets to the house and sometimes it doesn't and a walk to the house is not far.

There's a lot to be done in its own time. The main thing is I'm feeling as though for the first time in my life I'm in the right place at the right time – feeding my soul on the sounds of water day and night over rocks, colours and shapes of clouds and sky, watching birdlife, animals, and letting nature teach me. What has already been inside all along, is now being validated and freed. If you feel you need to **DO WHAT YOUR INNER SELF WANTS**, just be guided by that and you'll get it brought to you step by step and you'll look back in amazement at how you managed it with so little – you just need 'the dream'.

Alexandria,
PO Box 1002, ARMIDALE 2350.

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld.

DOGS ~~KIDS~~ PAGE



Summer usually involves lots of fun things for kids - Christmas, new toys, holidays . . . Now spare a thought for the furry, bone-loving member of your family. Did he/she get a Christmas treat and did he/she enjoy the summer holiday? Read on for some ways to enhance a dog's life.

Yummy Dog Biscuits

Ingredients

- 1 cup wholemeal flour
- 1 cup unbleached plain flour
- 1/2 cup polenta
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup soy milk
- 1 cup vegetable stock
- 4 tbsp vegetable oil



Ask an adult to set the oven at 200°. Put flours, polenta, parsley and salt into a bowl. In another bowl mix the soy milk, chicken stock and vegetable oil. Add this liquid mixture to the flour mixture and combine well. Sprinkle some flour (extra) on bench top and knead the mixture (you may need the help of an adult). Break off pieces of dough about the size of a 20 cent piece and roll into balls. Dip balls in polenta (extra) then place on a greased baking tray. Bake for 20 minutes. When all biscuits are made, turn oven off but leave biscuits in for a few hours to harden. These dog treats will keep in an airtight container in the fridge for up to one week. Otherwise, store in the freezer.

Some Ways to Brighten up a Dog's Life

- ★ Paint your dog's kennel with colorful outdoor paints.
- ★ Knit or sew your dog a 'jacket' to keep him/her extra warm in winter. You could also embroider his/her name on it.
- ★ Take your dog on the next family holiday. Check out a book that tells you all the places dogs are welcome Australia-wide. It's called *Holidaying with Dogs*, by Peter and Sandy Dennis.
- ★ Give your dog bones and/or rawhide treats regularly - dogs love to chew and it keeps their teeth healthy.
- ★ Consider giving specially formulated garlic and kelp dog tablets to keep fleas away.
- ★ Walk your dog daily to keep him/her healthy and happy.
- ★ Ensure your dog has an ample supply of fresh water to drink especially on warm summer days.
- ★ Hug him/her often.



Dogs Can Talk

Dogs don't use words as we do, but they have their own ways of communicating. If you watch them carefully, you will soon learn what they are trying to tell you. Look at the position of your dog's tail, ears, mouth, face, hair, and at his/her posture to find out what he/she is trying to tell you.

- ★ A calm dog will have relaxed ears and tail.
- ★ A dominant dog will look straight into your eyes.
- ★ A submissive dog will avoid looking straight at you, may roll on its back, or show you the whites of its eyes.
- ★ A dog standing on all four legs and wagging its tail knows you are the leader and is likely to come when you call.
- ★ A dog that is bowing with front paws out in front and tail wagging high in the air is asking for a game.
- ★ A dog with ears back against its head, teeth bared, tail between legs, and bending down slightly is showing fear. In this posture a dog is unpredictable - do not approach it.
- ★ A dog with its tail straight up, ears forward, teeth bared and growling is showing aggression. Keep away.
- ★ Listen to your dog as well: a cry, whimper or whine indicates loneliness; a growl or bark is a warning; a plaintive bark or howl is asking for attention; a yip, yelp or scream indicates pain.



BOOK REVIEW A Dog's Best Friend

by Elizabeth Honey



As well as important information about caring for a dog's health and safety, this book shows kids how to have wild and wonderful fun with their pet dog. It is written for kids so it is easy to follow, although adult participation will be required for some of the activities.

P/b, Chicago Renew Press, distributed by Boobooks, PO Box 163, Tea Gardens 2324.
RRP \$25.95.



MUSING ABOUT HERBS

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

The history of herbs stretches far back in time, a history as intriguing as the plants themselves. In fact there is even mention in papyrus records of the ancient Egyptians placing small bunches of herbal plants in the hands of newly prepared mummies so the departed 'kha' or soul might enjoy the herbs' medicinal and culinary benefits in the afterlife.

The ancient Persians and Greeks also enjoyed the nutritional and healing properties of fresh herbs. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, mentions a list of 400 different herbs, many of which we still use today.

ALOE, ALOE, ALOE . . .

Aloes, with their rosettes of fleshy, sword-shaped leaves are familiar as greenhouse and ornamental plants. The plant grows principally in South Africa and the juice is intensely bitter. Aloe 'tea' made from aloe mixed with other herbs has been used as an antiseptic, a purgative, and also as an eyewash. The dried and powdered juice, if dusted on plants in a garden, is said to repel rabbits, possums and other wildlife. Rather than make medicinal preparations from one's own garden, it is suggested that aloe preparations be acquired from chemists and other well known sources as some aloe species are considered poisonous.

A FLORAL CLOCK

Chicory, someone once said, 'is the weed with which the French like to

adulterate their coffee'. The plant has very pretty blue star-like flowers which opened precisely at 7am and closed so regularly at noon that Linnaeus the famous Swedish naturalist called it his 'floral clock'. The French use chicory to neutralise the stimulating effect of coffee. It is also said to act as a purifier for the liver, kidney and spleen.

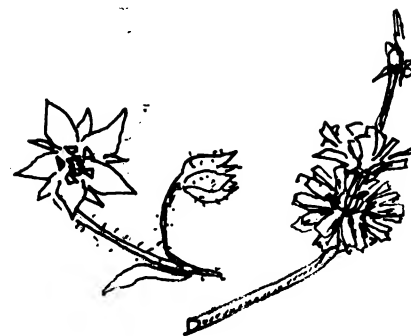
THE BALM OF HURT MINDS. . .

(Macbeth)

The tea made from balm mint or lemon mint (*Melissa officinalis*) is said to relieve nervous headaches, toothaches and earaches. This herb is greatly loved by honey bees. Its botanical name, *Melissa*, is the Greek word for the honey bee.

AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN

Rosmarinus officinalis, also called 'rosemary', is the herb of remembrance. Rosemary is one of the many sweet-scented plants that abound in English gardens. Scholars in ancient times wore sprigs of it to examinations to improve their concentration. Legend has it that the Virgin Mary spread her linen cloak over a white-flowered bush of rosemary and, ever since, the flowers are as blue as her robe. Rosemary tea, recommended by the ancient Roman author, Pliny, for failing eyesight, is also noted for its relief of headaches. As a food herb rosemary is added to soups, garnishes, stuffings and herbal bread.



THE STARFLOWER

Ancient Rome knew well the secrets of the starflower which they called *Borra* and which we know today as the herb borage (*Borago officinalis*). It is a common wildflower found growing in the Mediterranean region. The Romans found it useful as both a tonic in herbal remedies and as a flavouring in meals. Research in recent years has found that the seeds of the borage herb or starflower contain 23 percent gamma linoleic acid (GLA), which is twice as much GLA as that found in evening primrose oil, previously believed to be the richest source. GLA is considered important in helping the body to maintain its levels of prostaglandins – the hormone-type chemicals which regulate many body functions including digestion, cell growth, and the monthly menstrual cycle.

Centuries ago apothecaries and herbalists praised borage for its wonderful healing properties, but they also seemed to hint at it being a likely source of much stronger potions. 'Ye starrs and leefs of bourage maketh the mind merrie and joyful,' light-heartedly declares an ancient text!



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SAUCY TASTES OF THE TROPICS

by Susan Hands, Innisfail, Qld.
Drawing by Howard Hands.

So many of our luscious tropical fruits can be used to enhance the flavours of other foods that it's a pity they are not more often preserved as sauces. The heat makes many residents of the tropics averse to spending time in a hot kitchen stirring a steaming cauldron. Here I've included two recipes for the store cupboard, both with minimal cooking time, and some others for immediate use.

PRESERVED SAUCES

Mango Honey

Take 2 kg of sugar, add 600 ml of water and boil for 20 minutes. Constantly skim syrup until clear. Have ready the grated or processed flesh of two mangoes. Add this to your syrup and allow to boil for another 10 minutes. Cool and bottle.

Guava Catsup

Peel, chop or process 3 kg of guavas, sprinkle with salt and allow to stand overnight. Add 2 dozen onions cut small or processed, 1/2 kg of mustard seed, 2 dozen processed black peppers. Mix with cider vinegar until the mixture reaches the consistency of thick catsup. Fill jars, cover with cloth and tie tightly.

IMMEDIATE USE

Mango Sauce

2 large ripe mangoes, peeled and seeds removed
1 cup water
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp ground ginger

Process in blender until smooth. Boil gently for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Absolutely delicious on grilled fish.

Coconut Cream

3 cups freshly grated coconut
3 cups water
Bring to boil then let stand for about half an hour.

Tip liquid through a strainer and press the flesh. Discard the flesh and use the milk in place of stock in curry recipes.

Spiced Fruit Sauce

1/2 pineapple, cored, peeled and put through blender

1/4 cup tomato puree
1 tsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp dry mustard
dash cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in saucepan. Simmer for ten minutes. Serve hot with pork, veal or chicken.

Pawpaw Sauce

1 choko, peeled
1/2 large pawpaw, seeded and peeled
60 g grated green ginger, peeled
1 tsp chilli sauce or 1 fresh chilli
1 orange, peeled

Place in blender, process until smooth. Boil gently for approximately 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve hot

on fish, chicken, vegetable fritters.

For a completely different taste add 1/2 cup of peanut paste to the above during the cooking stage.

Avocado Sauce

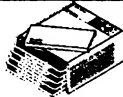
1 cup mashed avocado
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup grated lemon
salt & pepper to taste

Put through a blender or beat all the ingredients with a fork. Serve chilled. Prepare no more than one hour before serving as avocado flesh darkens.

Sweet Pawpaw Sauce

juice of 1/2 a lime
1 small pawpaw, seeded and peeled
1/2 tsp nutmeg

Blend until smooth. Boil gently 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Delicious with homemade yoghurt. Those with a sweet tooth can add a tablespoon of sugar, honey, or their favourite jam.

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IN THE KITCHEN

Few kitchen activities are more satisfying than baking your own bread. In a fast-changing world, home-baked bread is a symbol of stability and old-fashioned values from a time when bread making was an intrinsic part of the household routine. The popularity of electric bread-making machines indicates that many people still do yearn for the crusty yeasty loaf in preference to the bland mass produced substitute so often offered in supermarkets. Popular as they are, you don't need a machine in order to create tasty loaves for your family. In reply to many requests from readers for an 'easy' bread recipe, Ann Cliff of Hill End, Victoria has shared some bread-making basics and a very simple recipe.

Crusty home-baked bread, warm from the oven, is one of the simple pleasures of life. On a recent visit back to my origins in country Yorkshire, I found my elderly relatives still making their own bread, 'without one of those complicated machines' as they pointed out. So I rolled up my sleeves and got back into low technology bread making.

It is so easy to make bread. It used to be time consuming because you had to mix the ingredients, knead them into a dough, let it rise and then knead again before baking. But not now! There is a simple method, which I will tell you about. But let's go back to the beginning.

Bread as we know it could not be made until wheat was grown because most of the other grains such as oats, barley and millet are unsuitable, and rye was not grown until later. Early civilisations toasted grains before removing the husks by thrashing, and ate a sort of muesli. Then they made unleavened bread, the simplest sort, a dough of flour and water made into cakes and cooked on hot stones, just like damper. Australian damper, Mexican tortillas, and other breads made without yeast, are good to eat when fresh and warm, but heavy when cold. They don't keep very well.

If you can grow or buy wheat and grind your own flour, it's good fun to try all the ways of cooking it. Soaking wheat to make a sort of porridge was another prehistoric, probably Neolithic, recipe, handed down as 'frumenty' to this day in the north of England. We used to make frumenty when we grew a wheat crop. The grain was soaked overnight in water and dried fruit was added, with nutmeg and even cream, for a Christmas treat.

When pottery was invented, people had utensils to bake in, so we can imagine that bread followed, supposedly in Egypt. But somebody had to discover the rising process, the 'leaven' which gives us the familiar bread texture.

Bread is made when the wheat grain

is soaked and the protein, gluten, dissolves. When live yeast is mixed with the warm gluten, it produces gas bubbles of carbon dioxide which get trapped in the dough, making it increase in size. Then we cook the loaf and heat coagulates the protein, so the bread is set. The heat of the oven also kills the yeast, so there are no more bubbles. We can imagine some wild yeast spores settling on warm dough, so that it rose out of the bowl and amazed the prehistoric cook.

Bread making is like beer, wine and cheese making in that we use living organisms to ferment and produce, in the case of bread, gas (and alcohol in beer and wine, and acid in cheese). That is why the bowl and the ingredients should be warm when you start bread making. The warmth encourages the yeast to grow more quickly.

For bread making you need strong flour, made from a special kind of wheat. You can buy it white, brown, wholemeal and soft grain these days at supermarkets. Also available is dried yeast, which is needed for the quick method.



AN EASY LOAF

Warm a bowl and set the oven to 220°C. To 450 g bread making flour, add 2.5 g salt, 15 g raw sugar, 1 sachet dried yeast, 15 g vegetable fat. Mix the ingredients

and rub in the vegetable fat, then add 300 ml warm water and mix to a wet slippery dough, adding more water as required. Knead it lightly in the bowl, which dries it, and then add more water. Put the mixture onto a floured board, knead for about five minutes and then put into a greased baking tin and stand in a warm place.

(Kneading is a firm action of the fists – you pull the dough out and push it back together.)

Soon, in about 15 – 20 minutes, the mixture will rise and double in size. Pop it in the oven for 35 – 40 minutes. That's it. When it is cooked, the loaf sounds hollow when rapped on the bottom.

Cautions:

- Don't handle the tin roughly when the dough has risen, or bang the oven door, or it will collapse.
- Don't put too much salt in the mix, it will kill the yeast. Do put in some salt or the yeast may be too lively!
- Don't overheat while it is rising, keep at about blood heat.

I think the reason why we don't have to knead the bread twice, at length, is because it's easy to mix in the dry yeast thoroughly. All that kneading was to distribute the yeast through the mixture.

The conventional way was to use a culture of fresh yeast, which looks like putty. This was added to warm water and sugar, and encouraged to start 'working', or fermenting, before it was added to the flour.

Sourdough bread was made by using a piece of dough from the previous day's bread making to provide the yeast

'I don't know how much longer I can go on making bread,' said my aunt, aged 91. Not surprisingly, she finds the vigorous kneading makes her hands ache. Politely, we mentioned the no-knead method and she might give it a try. In this recipe you mix the dough firmly and leave it to rise – it works quite well with wholemeal flour.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS

by Mary Horsfall, Longwood East, Vic.

On a recent car trip to northern NSW we noticed kilometre after kilometre of lantana plants dominating the roadside vegetation. Surely there hadn't been so much of it last time we drove that way! Areas of bushland we walked through were also being invaded by this prolific weed. Tiny seedlings had sprouted almost as thickly as grass in some areas. Unhappily, this is just one of a growing number of environmental weeds in Australia, and not even regarded as one of the worst.

The National Weeds Strategy defines a weed as 'a plant which has, or has potential to have, a detrimental effect on financial, social or conservation values'. An environmental weed is a plant which invades and thrives in environments in which it does not naturally occur, to such an extent as to disrupt the ecological processes. About fifteen percent of the total flora now found in Australia has been introduced. About half of these species invade

native vegetation, and about one-quarter are, or have the potential to be, serious environmental weeds.

Most environmental weeds are garden escapees. Some were introduced as pasture grasses, for erosion control, or as shelter belts and animal fodder. Native species (such as the cootamundra wattle) which have been introduced to areas outside their usual habitat have also become environmental weeds.

The impact of aquatic weeds in our waterways should not be overlooked. There are over 60 species of aquatic weeds in our inland waterways. Sixteen of these are significant problems and another thirteen have a similar potential. *Salvinia* is probably the most well known of the aquatic weeds. It grows in still or slow-moving tropical waters worldwide. Reproduction is speedy, with the plant able to double its area in only three days. It forms dense mats which choke the waterway, reducing light penetration and oxygen. Other

vegetation may take root on a *salvinia* 'mat' to form floating islands. Biological control by means of a weevil is often effective and research into other biological controls is continuing.

Even the marine environment is not exempt from the problem. Japanese kelp, believed to have been introduced to southern coastal waters via the discharge of ballast water from ships, is estimated to be spreading about ten kilometres per year. A recent control programme in Port Phillip Bay (Victoria) involved divers actually manually removing the kelp because it has invaded areas of indigenous seaweeds, altering the seabed habitat and reducing marine biodiversity.

Reduction of biodiversity is one of the major problems associated with environmental weeds generally. Unhampered by pests, predators and diseases that would control them in their native habitats, they reproduce so prolifically that they smother the indigenous flora. Reduction of shelter, food and nesting sites for a variety of native birds, mammals and reptiles is the inevitable result.

The hard seeds of many of the worst environmental weeds (such as bitou bush) enable them to germinate prolifically after fire. Paradoxically, controlled burning at appropriate intervals can be part of an effective control programme. In other cases (such as giant sensitive plant) pods are dispersed along waterways and can colonise wetlands, spreading further along the river system with each season. Environmental weeds in water courses can lower the water table and increase salinity, altering the preferred habitat for the indigenous plant and animal life and encouraging proliferation of more pest species better suited to the altered conditions.

Any disturbance to the natural environment caused by rabbits, feral goats, buffaloes, agricultural activities, land clearing, or changed fire regimes can leave a niche to be rapidly invaded by environmental weeds. Extra soil and



Environmental weeds, such as the prolifically reproducing lantana, are having devastating effects on the biodiversity of indigenous flora and fauna.

Species	Key community/habitat affected	Nature of impact/threat
Prickly acacia (<i>Acacia nilotica</i>) small tree/shrub	Mitchell grasslands	Replaces perennial <i>Astrebla</i> spp. with annuals or bare soil and is a long-term threat to the Mitchell grass biome; converts grassland to shrubland.
Para grass (<i>Brachiaria mutica</i>) semi-aquatic	Wetlands and streams in the wet-dry and wet tropics and sub tropics	Planted for ponded pasture but spreading into nontarget areas destroying waterbird breeding habitats and choking tropical streams; replaces native vegetation.
Buffel grass (<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>) ground cover	Moist 'refuges' and river banks in the arid zone	Threatening keystone habitats by displacing native vegetation and altering the fire regime; likely to reduce fauna resources.
Bitou bush (<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera rotundata</i>) Boneseed (<i>C.m. monilifera</i>) shrub	Range of coastal systems: foredune, heath, littoral rainforest; range of coastal and subcoastal systems	Displaces native vegetation with unknown effects on fauna.
Rubber vine (<i>Cryptostegia grandiflora</i>)	Gallery and other riparian communities in the wet-dry tropics; dry rainforest (vine thickets)	Smothers trees and shades out the ground layer; destroys riparian vegetation and threatens associated fauna; forms impenetrable thickets in Queensland's Gulf river systems.
Water hyacinth (<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>) aquatic	Standing surface waters especially where nutrient levels are high; occurs in all mainland states but particularly tropics and subtropics	Aggressively invades open water with potential for very rapid growth; still spreading in Australia despite extensive control measures; alters aquatic ecosystem.
Aleman grass (<i>Echinochloa polystachia</i>) semi-aquatic	Wetlands in the wet-dry and wet tropics; grows in water up to 2 m	As for para grass; recent introduction and not yet widespread but larger than para grass with greater potential for damage.
Reed sweetgrass (<i>Glyceria maxima</i>) semi-aquatic	Margins of creeks, rivers and ponded areas up to 1 m deep; temperate species eastern states	Used as a pasture or ornamental plant but is spreading to nontarget areas.
Hymenachne (<i>Hymenachne amplexicaulis</i>) semi-aquatic	As for para grass but can grow in water up to 2 m	Recently introduced as ponded pasture species, so not yet widespread, but has potential to modify tropical wetlands totally if not controlled.
Giant sensitive plant (<i>Mimosa pigra</i>) small tree/shrub, semi-aquatic	Disturbed areas especially flood plains in the wet-dry tropics	Totally displaces native species leaving bare mud if removed; spreads by floods.
Bridal creeper (<i>Myrsiphyllum asparagoides</i>) creeper	Spreading through wide range of habitats in southern Australia	Smothers ground and shrub layers.
Parkinsonia (<i>arkinsonia aculeata</i>) small tree/shrub	Ephemeral wetlands and riparian communities in the wet-dry tropics	Invades mesic habitats and seasonal wetlands threatening waterbird habitats of continental significance.
Mission grass (<i>Pennisetum polystachion</i>) ground cover	Dry forests and woodlands of the wet-dry tropics	Displaces native sorghum changing the fire regime, which potentially reduces recruitment potential of woodlands species of high conservation significance.
Mesquite (<i>Prosopis</i> spp.) small tree/shrub	Semi-arid and arid riparian and other communities; Mitchell grasslands	Similar to prickly acacia but has a wider range of soil tolerances.
Salvinia (<i>Salvinia molesta</i>) aquatic	Stationary and slow-moving water bodies especially where nutrient levels are high; all mainland states and territories	Aggressively invades open water with potential for very rapid growth; still spreading in Australia despite extensive control measures; alters aquatic ecosystems.
Athel pine (<i>Tamarix aphylla</i>) small tree	Dryland river systems; currently small infestations	Displaces native trees; salinises soil; changes hydrology and geomorphology; reduces fauna resources.
Blue thunbergia (<i>Thunbergia grandiflora</i>)	Tropical lowland rainforest in far north Queensland, especially along watercourses	Vigorous vine rapidly spreading and smothering native vegetation to the canopy; infestation in early stages.
Japanese kelp (<i>Undaria pinnatifida</i>)	Near-shore habitats along east coast of Tasmania	Spreading at rate of 10 km per year with potential to spread along southern coastline.

Chart from *State of the Environment Australia* 1996, CSIRO Publishing. Commonwealth of Australia Copyright, reproduced by permission

environmental weeds. Extra soil and water nutrients from fertiliser runoff or urban wastes washed into bushland help weeds to thrive while being detrimental to most indigenous plants.

The accompanying chart (page 52) shows some of Australia's worst environmental weeds. These will, however, vary widely between areas. Many other plants, not on the chart, are causing significant problems in some places. Blackberries, for example, are a major pest across the southern states. Able to reproduce prolifically from seed as well as vegetatively, they seriously limit native plant regeneration and provide habitat for pest animal species such as foxes and rabbits. To date, control of blackberries has mainly been through reliance on chemical applications. Research is continuing in biological control by means of a mixture of strains of blackberry rust.

As is the case with environmental weeds generally, blackberry control programmes will be most successful if they are multifactorial. This might involve, according to the weed being tackled, a combination of biological and chemical control, grazing, mowing, prescription burning and active regeneration of indigenous species likely to be able to compete successfully with regenerating weeds. To date, little research has been done into this latter strategy and individual landholders and groups undertaking regeneration work have relied on trial and error or inspired guesswork. In cases where weed infestation has followed environmental disturbance, little success will be achieved unless the source of the initial degradation is rectified.

Other (but by no means all) environmental weeds to be aware of, according

to where you live, are cotoneaster, English and cape ivy, honeysuckle, morning glory, kikuyu grass, pampas grass*, pittosporum, polygala, agapanthus, wild watsonia*, cape tulip*, St John's wort*, thistle varieties*, asparagus fern, flax leaf broome, cape broome, mirror bush. It is recommended that people living close to bushland, reserves or forests not grow these species; some indeed are declared noxious weeds (in Victoria at least), these are marked by an asterisk.

Garden refuse should not be disposed of in bushland or roadside reserves. If it spreads like Jack's legendary beanstalk in your garden, it will do the same in the bush, with possibly devastating effects on the ecology. If you have an efficient composting system that you know becomes hot enough to destroy seeds, composting any known or potential environmental weeds is a suitable means of disposal. Otherwise, seed heads, stem portions, bulbs and persistent root systems can be burned, or sealed in plastic bags and left in the sun until the heat destroys them.

To find out about environmental weeds in your area contact the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, local environment groups, or your council. Many councils, often in conjunction with environment groups, organise community 'weeding days', or projects involving weed removal from and regeneration of specific problem areas. In central Australia, for example, where athel pine (also known as tamarisk or salt cedar) is a major threat to arid-land watercourses, land managers, including the Aboriginal community, are working on controlling this weed as part of an integrated catchment management programme. Many other groups through-

out Australia are working on smaller-scale projects to eradicate blackberries, lantana, morning glory and other invasive weeds from specific environmentally sensitive areas.

It's a good idea for landholders whose land incorporates an area of bush to go for their walks armed with a trowel and bag so any garden escapees can be instantly destroyed. It is obviously not possible for us personally to clear hundreds of kilometres of the Finke River of tamarisk, or thousands of hectares of the Northern Territory of giant sensitive plant, but we can practise prevention and active control of environmental weeds in our backyards and local areas




PERSONAL BUSHFIRE PROTECTION

People who die in bushfires are rarely killed by the touch of flames – they die away from the flames, but because they are roasted by radiant heat, their body fluids evaporate or they suck in smoke. So make up a fire survival kit for each member of the family: a pure wool blanket to insulate the body, a drinking flask and/or water spray and a nose mask and vented goggles.

SCLERODERMA FOUNDATION

What is Scleroderma? It is actually one of the more common auto-immune diseases which shares most of the features of mixed connective tissue disease. To help sufferers with this illness, the Scleroderma Foundation of Victoria has a nurse practitioner working at St Vincent's Hospital. Phone 03-9288-3651 for details and for info about support groups in other states.



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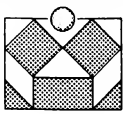
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CONFESSIONS OF A LAZY GARDENER

by June Birket, Crystal Creek, NSW.

Well spring is here, the rain has come, the ground is soft, I suppose I will have to plant something in the garden. One thing with a lot of rain, the weeds will pull out easily and if I just dig around the shrubs in a circular bed I can throw in some impatiens – they must be one of the easiest of plants, have a variety of colours and multiply into huge beds of colours and flowers at the smallest of cost.

I am fortunate enough to have 'inherited' a rock-bed garden in the front lawn and if I plant some nasturtiums they will give a lot of ground cover in a variety of colours that look gloriously pretty. They can be hand-seeded or bought as plants and the flowers look beautiful in vases. I like the way they flow down over the rock bed in a shawl-like effect, very pretty.

Maybe because I am lazy, I will just plant some azalea shrubs with them for some contrasting colour, white maybe and lipstick red. I am feeling very pleased over the amount of colour in the garden for very little work. Wishing to save effort, I chipped around my fruit trees and threw in some impatiens plants. As I wanted an easy border to plant along my front garden I bought daisies and geraniums of all colours as I know they will multiply and shoots can be transplanted to other areas of the garden. All these



Plant at least five trees in your life; it's like money in your children's future bank account.

provide smiling faces of colour for a huge part of the year. A simple garden, that is what I want.

I have a soft spot for the old-fashioned lilies and as I have three very wet areas I will plant them there to thrive in the damp and wet conditions. One of these areas is outside my bedroom window so I will have a fragrant perfume by day and night.

For a back garden I planted a pretty border that included an ornamental that looks like little pretty cabbages, and a border of old-fashioned snow drops or daffodils to complete the picture. Guess

what? I am hardly puffed; gardening can be simple if you let it.

My garden is large and as a choice of big trees to measure my years, I chose the Illawarra flame tree, side by side with a jackaranda, all down my driveway, so in summer I will have a magnificent display of red, purple, red, purple – nothing can beat the colour of that!

The old bracken fern, if placed in the right place and controlled, makes a fine greenery behind any flower bed and it also looks great picked and in vases to complement any flower; soft maidenhair fern is excellent also. Good old-fashioned pine trees of almost any variety look good in any corner of a garden, miniature for small gardens or larger pines for a property.

I believe whatever is easiest to grow, looks good and is easy to maintain should be the garden that is best for you.

I also believe everyone should plant at least five trees in their lifetime, more if possible, for it is like putting money in the bank, you and your children's bank of the future.

Gardening is easy with a little bit of research, a little bit of effort and a large desire to make things beautiful. Remember to keep it simple so that it takes not too much effort.

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OLD ELECTRIC BLANKETS? RIVETING IDEAS FOR RECYCLING

by Pamela Odijk, Bribie Island, Qld.

Photograph by Herman Odijk.

There are many useful ways in which old electric blankets can be recycled – so don't just throw them out. In fact, you may even find yourself searching the op shops where old electric blankets are often sold, with cords removed, as 'dogs' blankets', which is one ideal use for them for a start. Before you can recycle the old electric blankets sensibly, you will need to remove the attached plastic control unit where the electrical cord used to be connected, and then cut a small hole so the internal wiring can be pulled out. Then wash the blanket(s) the same way as you would wash any blanket – gently in luke-warm water for washing and rinsing to prevent shrinking, and dry away from direct sunlight. Now you have a good quality warm blanket which has myriad uses. Following are some recycling ideas.

- Use them as dogs' blankets as just mentioned, or, better still, line your pet's basket or box with one to keep out the cold draughts. Sew tie tapes to the blanket so it can be tied to the basket and will stay in place. Put another over an old pillow to make a warm mattress for your furry friend – or a birdcage cover if you have a caged feathered friend. If you care for injured native animals you will find them useful here as well.

- Better still, make your pet a warm winter coat either using a commercial pattern, one which I designed for GR 105, or improvise. They make ideal rugs for all kinds of animals including calves, cows and horses. For larger animals, just sew two or three blankets together. (The photo shows Fredd the dog getting ready for bed in his coat fashioned from an old electric blanket.) Animal coats can be held in place with velcro stripping so it will pull off the animal should it become entangled.

- Join two or three old electric blankets together and use these on your own bed as an underblanket. By joining several old electric blankets you will leave ample tuck-in all round, so it will stay in place. You may need to cut off the rounded corners and overlock or zigzag



Fredd being fitted for his pyjamas – a sleeping coat fashioned from an old electric blanket; wiring removed, of course.

the then-straight side before joining blankets together to prevent fraying. Because the resulting underblanket is of good quality wool it makes your bed warm in winter, and it can be used in summer too. (We have one of these underblankets on our bed even throughout the hot Queensland summers.)

- Join two or three of these recycled blankets together in a similar way and use them as ordinary blankets. They are much cheaper and often warmer than new store-bought blankets, and the variation in colour should not bother you as they will not be seen between the sheets and the top bed cover.

- Sew a single recycled electric blan-

ket or part of a larger sized one to the bottoms of the blankets you already use to make them longer so they have ample tuck-in and are not so easily pulled up during the night. This is especially useful for young children.

- Cut several innersoles from an old electric blanket, stitch them together around the outside and place them inside your slippers, gumboots, or outside shoes for extra winter warmth.

- Make tie-on pillow protectors which can be easily removed and washed. They will make your pillows last longer.

- Make cushion inserts and fill by using the wadding or feathers from your old pillows. The wool is firm and will

even help stop feathers from escaping through the cushion.

- Try dyeing an old electric blanket, add a fringe and perhaps some applique, and use as a knee rug or throw rug in the house or car. As wool is a natural fabric it will absorb dye well, but you must not have the dye bath too hot or the blanket will shrink and felt. Be careful in selecting the appropriate dye product and follow the instructions carefully.

- If dyeing is successful for you, perhaps make one or two door curtains to prevent draughts around doors. Curtains can be decorated with braid or fringe. Or you can make similar window curtains for a child's bedroom as these will make the room warmer and quieter too. A rod pocket can be added to the back with tape or some cotton fabric, or make hanging tabs through which the curtain rod is passed to lessen the weight and thickness of hems.

- Old electric blankets can be used as an interlining between curtains and their linings to make a room quieter, warmer and darker.

- Make a cover similar to a doona cover with tapes at each inside corner and along the sides, with some press studs to close the opening. Place corresponding

tapes on the corners and sides of the electric blanket and tie it as an insert. This makes an ideal picnic blanket or car rug. The cover can be made from patchwork, sheeting, or other fabric, and can be easily removed and washed.

- Use an old electric blanket over the kitchen or dining table and under the tablecloth to protect the tabletop against spills or damage from children's craft activities. Wool will repel any moisture and it will not burn.

- Join several layers and cut to shape to make an inexpensive and excellent underlay for your ironing board. Sew around the outside of the layers and add tying tapes at the top and bottom of the board and in two places along the sides. Tie these tapes underneath the ironing board to keep the underlay firmly in place.

- Make a cutlery bag with a drawstring top for your picnic basket. It will be very durable and the knife points and fork tines will not so easily protrude.

- Use as padding inside a patchwork quilt. 'Stitch in the ditch' through the blanket to keep it in place. However, care must be taken with washing the quilt to avoid the wool inside shrinking.

- Make large bags from several old

electric blankets and put over your folding tables, banana lounges, folding chairs etc to prevent them being damaged when not in use. I made several of these to put over folding furniture in our caravan to prevent it scratching and being scratched when in transit.

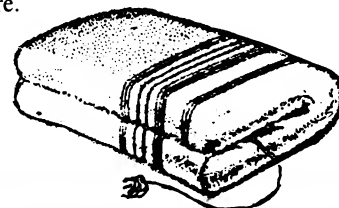
- Join several old electric blankets and use them to put over, on, and between furniture and other items when moving.

- Cut and use as an extra interlining between a garment and its lining when making winter jackets and coats. You can then possibly get away with using a cheaper outer fabric.

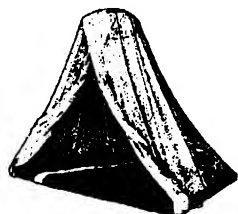
- Cut several thicknesses and use as inserts in place mats to protect your table. Wash with care to guard against shrinking.

- Cut several thicknesses in a long rectangular shape and place between two outer layers of other fabric to make a well insulated oven mitt.

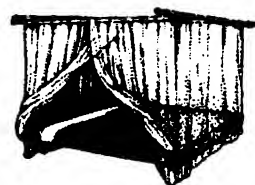
I'm sure you will think of countless more.



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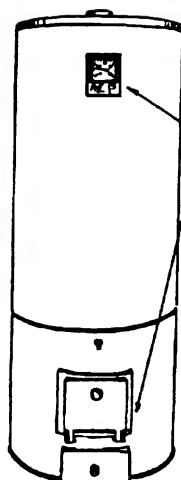
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BATTERY SWITCHING FOR 18 VOLTS ON A 12 VOLT HOME LIGHTING SYSTEM

by James Fischer, Bundamba, Qld.

Having recently purchased a word processor with a 240 volt to 18 volt power supply, I arrived home keen to try out my new acquisition. As I have only a 12 volt solar-powered home, I powered the word processor by my 12 volt to 240 volt 150 watt inverter. After 20 minutes of joyful bliss with my new pride and joy, the primary winding in the power supply burnt out, dashing my enthusiasm and leaving me in a state of disappointment.

Thus arose the need to create a power supply of 18 volts, but alas, the solar system only charges at 12 volts. The problem: how to get 18 volts and still charge the batteries at 12 volts, as at the time I had two 12 volt batteries in the system. On with the thinking cap. Two 6 volt batteries, three relay switches, one three-position switch, some lengths of electrical wiring, and two battery terminals with built-in switches later, I had arrived at the solution.

THE SOLUTION

I connected the two 6 volt batteries into the system in series for 12 volts, using

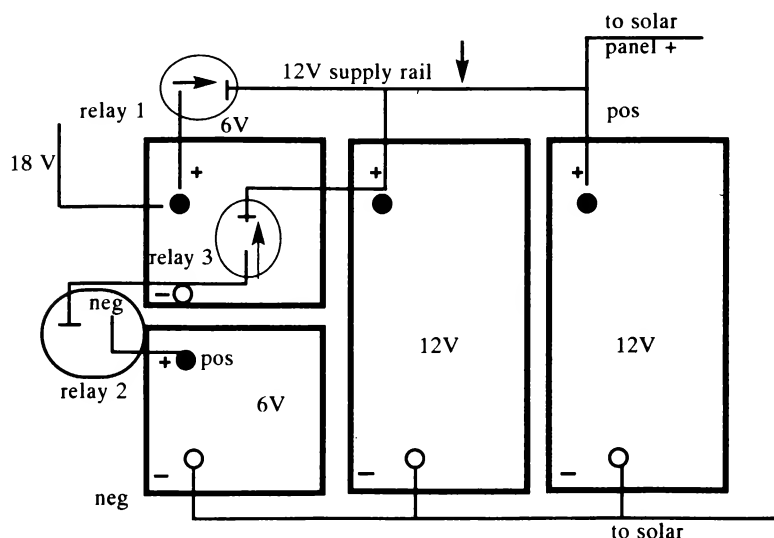
the two switching battery terminals, leaving these in the off position. This then isolates the first 6 volt battery from the positive rail of the other two 12 volt batteries. The second switching terminal is between the two 6 volt batteries, isolating these from each other. Across each of these switching terminals a relay switch is fitted, one relay for each terminal. Both of these two relays are wired up in parallel so as to switch together. These two switches isolate the two 6 volt batteries when in the off position and turn them into 12 volt in the on position.

The third relay switch is wired into the position between the positive terminal of the 12 volt batteries and the negative terminal of the 6 volt battery. This is on the switching terminal which is fitted between the two 6 volt batteries. This third relay when switched on places the 6 volt battery in series with the 12 volt batteries, giving the 18 volts required to run the word processor. It is important that when the third relay, is switched on, this is the one between the 12 volt positive terminal to the 6 volt negative terminal.

The other two relays must be in the off position, otherwise the second 6 volt battery goes into a discharge and could even explode. These two relay switches must isolate the 6 volt batteries when the third relay is switched on, also the third relay must be off when the other two relays are switched on.

To control the relays remotely I ran three-core wiring up into the house where I mounted the three-position switch. One wire is connected to the positive rail in the fuse box and to the centre pin on the switch, this switch is an on-off-on switch. The second wire is connected to the two parallel relays and one of the outside pins on the three-position switch. The third wire is connected to the third relay and the last pin left on the three-position switch.

I now have a switch in the house where I can switch the power to 18 volts, as it is now as I use the word processor to write this article. I can switch back to 12 volts for charging, or switch out the two 6 volt batteries when charged and keep them as standby batteries in cases of inclement weather. The batteries can also be manually switched at the terminal switches if the need should arise. A safety switch in the power line to the remote switch to prevent accidental use when batteries are switched in manual mode is also important to prevent accidents happening. If no manual switching is fitted to the batteries then this safety switch could be omitted.



Shows the layout off my batteries and the diagram of the relay placing. Relays 1 and 2 switch in or out of circuit the two 6 volt batteries. Relay 3 switches 6 volt battery into series mode with the 12 volt batteries.

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PORTABLE MICROJET SPRINKLER

by Alan Frowd, Gippsland, Vic.

With summer well and truly upon us and the shortcomings of our watering systems all too apparent, this simple homemade device might be useful to readers.

MATERIALS

- 19 mm white polypipe, eg 5 m (and polypipe glue)
- 4 or 5 m length of decking wood (treated pine or cypress)
- plumbers' saddles and screws to attach

- microjets – black ones are less likely to clog with debris (fan sprays and/or 360° sprays)
- 2 screw thread ends
- 1 screw-on sealing cap and one clip-on tap thread end
- 1 in-line water filter – install at tap or at start of water pipe (used for micro jets)

METHOD

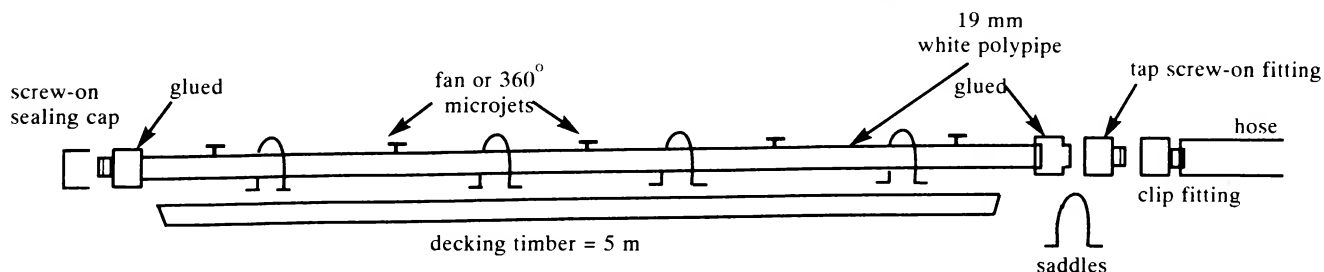
Glue on ends to white polypipe. Mount white poly on decking timber with sad-

dle. Drill holes for microjets at one metre intervals and screw jets in. Flush out any scraps of white poly in pipe. Screw seal one end and screw tap fitting on other. Use fan fittings for narrow garden strips, 360° for bigger areas.

This setup is light and easily manoeuvrable and can be slid or carried around. White polypipe is pressurised by water flow, ensuring minimum water loss and waste. Remove sealing cap if flushing is required. The in-line filter (readily available) minimises debris in polypipe.

Diagram Of Sprinkler

Use fan fittings for narrow garden strips, 360° for bigger areas.



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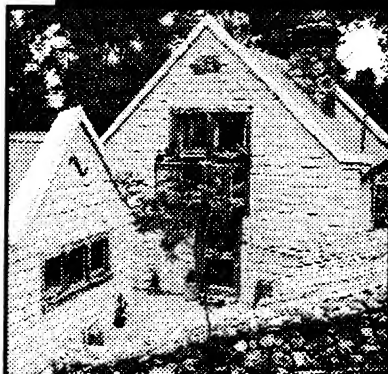
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FODDER FORESTS SHELTERBELTS AND MULBERRIES

by Vince Conlan, Binya, NSW.

In Palestine, there is a wind-swept wadi that is home to the village called Marda. On the ridge above is an Israeli settlement, all around are groves of stone walls and olives, within is a courtyard where grow ancient olive trees planted when Rome ruled the world. We don't just plant trees for ourselves. We plant them for our future.

Trees live longer in communities where they can protect one another from the elements, insects and animals. They can be planted as shelterbelts or in clumps to provide shade, shelter, wildlife habitats, wood, oils, medicines, flowers, fodder and food, as well as returning nutrients to the soil and reducing salinity. They are suited to courtyards, paddock corners, rocky ridges, and around dams.

Sheltered stock have increased birth rates. Research also shows that windbreaks may increase crop yields by five to thirty percent. A well designed shelterbelt will provide a sheltered zone 10

to 20 times the height of the trees. It is important to establish the direction of the prevailing winds and plant multiple rows of trees at right angles to these winds. Trees along ridges have greater height and will give greater protection. It is also important to use a variety of shrubs and trees of varying heights so there is a protective growth of branches from the ground up.

Make windbreaks as long as possible. Short shelterbelts may create damaging turbulence around each end. Very dense windbreaks also create turbulence. There is increased shelter close to the trees, but increased turbulence approximately ten metres leeward. Most people agree, windbreaks should allow some wind penetration. The best shelterbelts are permeable, long, have multiple rows, contain a variety of species, and are at right angles to the prevailing winds.

Trees planted around dams can provide shade and reduce evaporation. Stock will camp under the trees, which is

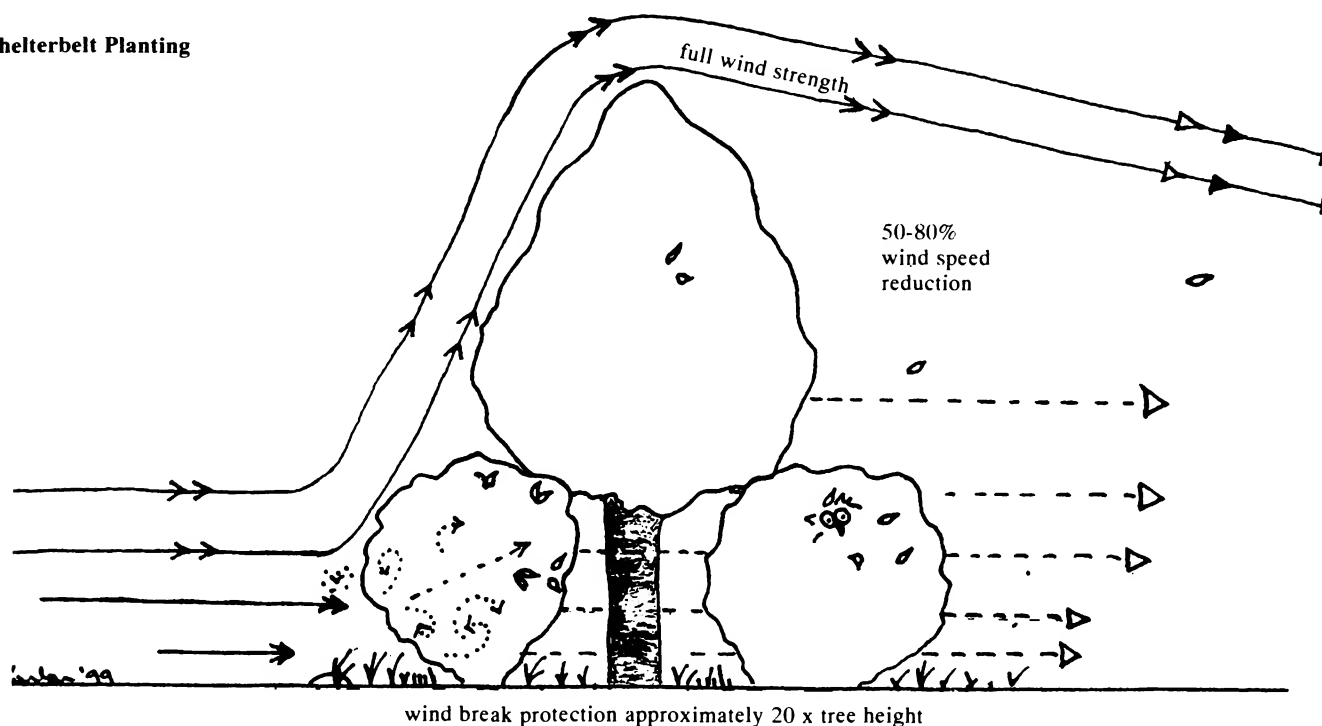
good, but droppings may wash into the dam and create algal blooms. This can be prevented by careful placement of contour banks.

Mulberry trees are an excellent addition to any forest. Black mulberry (*Morus nigra*) are drought hardy, frost tolerant and produce delicious berries that ripen over an extended period. The leaves are also nutritious fodder for stock and readily eaten.

MULBERRY

(*Morus alba*, *Morus nigra*, *Morus rubra*)
The mulberry tree has a rich history. A long time ago, so the story goes, the mythical Emperor Huangdi ordered his wife Xilingshi to rid his white mulberry trees of the pest that ate them. Xilingshi decided to drown the creamy white worms and, when she did, unravelled the first silken thread. Archaeological evidence suggests that the silkworm has been cultivated in China for nearly 7000 years. For most of this time China kept

Shelterbelt Planting



its secret. Immigrants took the art to Korea, a princess smuggled silkworm eggs into Khotan, but both peoples knew its value and kept the secrets of silk to themselves. Trade flourished along the Silk Road, linking China with India, Greece, Rome, and Persia from one century to another.

Eventually, Nosterian monks smuggled eggs out of China, and the Byzantine church and the Middle East was in the silk trade. But it was not until the second Crusades in the 13th Century, when 2000 silk weavers from Constantinople arrived in Italy, that silk production methods became known in Europe.

The Chinese kept the secrets of silk to themselves, but white mulberries (*Morus alba*) are widespread. A variety also grows in the Americas and is known as red mulberry (*Morus rubra*).

In Greece they tell of Pryamis and Thisbe, the most beautiful and well suited couple in all of Greece, whose parents would not let them marry. Stealing snatches of forbidden love in secret gardens, the couple agreed to meet at midnight beneath the white mulberry tree by the tomb of Ninus. Thisbe arrived first and waited in the moonlight. She did not hear a wounded lion until it was before her. She fled, leaving her scarf behind. The lion snatched it up and bled upon her precious silk. Pryamis picked up the bloody scarf. His fingers traced lion prints in shadows across the sand. Stricken with grief, blaming himself for his love's death, he fell upon his sword.

Thisbe found him dying. She cradled him in her arms and prayed that they would not be parted. When he died she took up his sword and killed herself. The lover's blood stained the ground black. From that night the mulberry tree has



Paul Conlan and mulberry fans Janie and Liam Gibson enjoy sampling the fruits of a productive young tree.

brought forth berries sweet and rich as the young couple's love. At midnight, in moonlight, by the tomb of Ninus, you may see Pryamis and Thisbe walking hand in hand or kissing beneath the first black mulberry tree.

Black Mulberry (*Morus nigra*)


Habitat: Occurs on most soils in Australia. Survives around abandoned homesteads, in areas with an average rainfall of 425 mm in free draining loam soils. Drought and frost tolerant.

Propagation: Take cuttings from last year's growth. Black mulberry trees are slow growing. They will need to be protected from grazing and may need watering over summer for several years.

Do not plant near clotheslines, carparks or garden paths. Bird droppings from a diet of the berries are deep red and staining. The berries themselves make an excellent dye, but the colour is almost impossible to remove if trodden into carpet. Plant them out the back or around your dam.

Uses: Black mulberries are delicious. The trees also produce nutritious fodder, and shade during summer. Their leaves form a mulch in winter. The berries are extremely moorish, whether eaten fresh off the tree, with ice cream, or made into jam. They are one of my most favourite fruit.

Next issue: *Casuarina* spp, until then, happy planting.




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LIVING ON A BUDGET

by Gerard & Glenda Newham, Clarendon, NSW.

Some of these hints may not be the cheapest way out of a given situation; at times, for example, paying a bill in instalments may cost extra, as often occurs when there is a discount for full payment. What the tips we offer here do is provide survival techniques we've gleaned over times when the cash reserves on hand were minimal. If you are in a single income situation, with or without kids, you may find some tactics of benefit to you.

ACQUIRE A FREEZER

Get a freezer, even if the initial purchase hurts. The cost of purchase can be offset against the cost benefits of buying food in bulk and freezing it. Meat can be stored in larger quantities and, after blanching, vegetables can be frozen as well for use in cooking. My personal favourite is the chest freezer, because it doesn't lose as much cold air upon opening as an upright freezer and is thus more efficient, and because, by virtue of its design, it keeps the contents cold longer in case of power outage. However, smaller persons may find it difficult to retrieve items from the bottom of a large chest freezer; it poses me no problems but I'm fairly large and can reach in easily. If this is a problem for you an upright freezer might serve your interests better. If you have excess capacity, fill it with water-filled containers – a full freezer is more efficient than a half-full one.

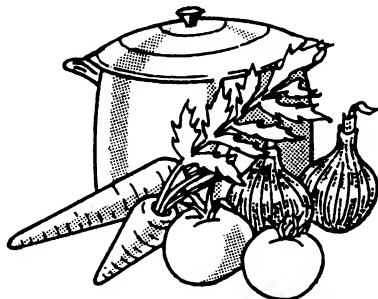
USE BUDGET CARDS

Organise to have budget cards sent to you for your most commonly paid accounts – telephone, electricity and other utilities. Try to pay at least a little off on each account every pay day and don't wait for a bill to fall due; work out what is reasonable as a part-payment and pay it when the opportunity arises. My experience is that utilities are more lenient about not getting paid by the due date if you can at least make part-payment. Nonpayment seems to irritate them more than not quite enough money or not quite on time. If your council provides a rate payment notice with a barcode, it may be possible for you to pay even your instalments in instalments at the post

office. Where possible, avoid the use of credit cards as it's easy to stack debt on, but can be difficult to pay it off. That being said, credit cards do make a little extra money available in times of emergency; we look on them as something of a safety net when used carefully.

UTILISE SOLAR POWER

Try to avoid the clothes drier – sun is free – and the air conditioner. Try cold sponge baths or showers during the day to help you keep cool. Both these appliances are very heavy on power. If you have the option, use the heat of the sun to warm rooms with the opening and later closing of curtains.



SAVE IN THE KITCHEN

Bulk meals up with cheaper staples. For example, serve a small portion of chicken with a lot of rice and sauce, or a small steak with lots of boiled or steamed potato, carrots and other vegies. If you like marinated chicken wings, kebabs and the like, save money by marinating them yourself in cliplock bags. The marinade can be frozen with the meat and will marinate the meal while defrosting in the fridge. There will be a small cost saving in the additional cooling effect of the thawing food upon the refrigerator.

Also on the subject of food; if the meal suits, cook a large batch and freeze the excess servings. These can be used to avoid the cost of a bought lunch if you have access to a microwave at work, or to provide a quick and easy meal if you are strapped for time. Frozen blanched vegetables, for example, only need a little extra simmering in boiling water to complete cooking. Older cookbooks and home economy guides offer assistance on blanching, pickling and other methods of preserving excess foodstuffs.

ALLOW FOR TREATS

Most important of all, make sure you budget some money to treat yourself. This can be something as simple as a night at the movies with a box of popcorn, or, even cheaper, rent a few videos and watch them with friends after a barbecue or other home-cooked meal. One of the problems we've found is that it can seem at times as though the only reason you work is to provide for the bills. Making sure you have some fun with your hard-earned money is one way of mitigating this feeling. Budget carefully, but try not to obsess if there are occasional low patches.

Best wishes, and try not to let anyone extinguish your dreams; they're the glue of life itself.

Free Budget Help

The Credit Union Services Corporation (Australia) has produced a booklet, *Budgeting: making it easy*. It contains lots of useful tips on money management and it is free! Ph: 131-128, for the cost of a local call anywhere in Australia.

WELL FERTILISED TOMATOES

If your soil is rich, avoid the frequently recommended practice of pruning out all side shoots to maintain a single stem, for the fertility of well prepared soil is capable of producing a much larger yield of fruit per plant than can possibly be accommodated by a single stem.

Peter Bennett, *Organic Gardening*.

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YOU COULD, BUT I WOULDN'T

The meter box is fixed to the wall, well out of reach of our resident snakes! Supported by a mere one or two screws, the meter board hangs out at a crazy angle. We run on the sun, have done for years, so you could say the box was redundant. You could, but I wouldn't.

They know the snakes can't get up there. They don't pay any rent. Why should they; there are no mod cons. There's running water – down the wall when it rains! You could say there's electricity too, you could, but I wouldn't.

I guess they're really squatters and should be evicted! They appear to be lazy and sleep all day! I've never seen them clean the place, and you could say their diet leaves a little to be desired too, you could, but I wouldn't.

They thump around on the roof at night, swim, dive and splash outside the window at three or four in the morning, not a swimsuit in sight. On the whole they're a pretty rowdy mob. You could say they should be better behaved, you could, but I wouldn't.

Behind the meter board, they pack in like sardines. They never squabble, they don't know anger, greed or selfishness. They're trusting, genuine and friendly. You could say it's a pity that people don't try to be more like them. You could, and I do!

They're green, all 25 of them. They're frogs. You could say we're privileged to have their trust, you could, and we are!

Penny, Maryborough, Qld.



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A RAMMED EARTH HOUSE BUILDING THE WALLS

by Bette Shiels, Bundaberg, Qld.

Before taking on the task of building a rammed earth house, you must either be super-fit or prepared to push physical pain to the back of the brain and concentrate on the project at hand. Before long you find all your friends commenting on how well you look, and asking what miracle diet you have found. Had said friends seen me drag myself back to our rented house after twelve hours of shovelling dirt, they would never have believed I'd last another month on earth.

We had our act together by now. We had learnt so much from pulling down the first wall that we considered it a blessing in disguise. Not only had our mixture been incorrect, we had not bonded the wall to the slab. This was apparent when the base of the wall slid off so cleanly. So Col scored the perimeter of the slab, where the walls were to stand, with a large hammer drill with a scabbling head, to groove the cement. Then, once we set up the panelwork, we poured a mixture of Bondcrete, Sila-seal and nonshrink grout into the wall cavity, which ensured there would be no rising damp and that the earth mixture adhered permanently.

Another correction we made was to dampen and score the top of each wall section rammed, to ensure each section we rammed was married to the section below, leaving no telltale lines between each run of earth mixture.

We completed each wall with a red ironbark beam 50 millimetres thick bolted to the hurricane rods we'd set in the wall cavities. Each wall stood 24 hours before we removed the outer panels. The first panel removed revealed a red soil wall, almost perfect except for the occasional ditch where small chunks of moist earth had stuck to the panel. This we rectified by simply rubbing each cleaned panel with good old canola oil from my kitchen before setting it in place. A slurry of earth mixed with Bondcrete and Lustre Seal was used to smooth the indentation. By the third wall, we had it right.



Bette had to take over the building of the walls after Col was offered paid employment.

On removal of the panels I painted the rammed earth with Lustre Seal, normally used as a cement sealer, and covered any unfinished walls with black plastic sheeting in case of rain, not knowing how the moisture would affect them. We were, however, pleasantly surprised when one weekend we left the walls uncovered and a sudden downpour did no damage at all.

We had completed eight outer walls with six interior still to be done, when Col was offered a job as inspector on a bridge being constructed fairly close to home. It was too good a prospect to refuse, and the bank fees were keeping us poor, so he accepted it. I was disappointed, thinking that we would have to put our building on hold, until Col said, 'You'll just have to build the rest of the walls while I'm working, and I'll help when I get home'.

I laughed initially, until I saw that he was serious. 'Are you crazy?' I spluttered. 'I can't even measure a line straight. You know I was born rustic, not symmetrical, and I haven't got the mus-

cle to use that rammer.'

'You won't have to. I'll hire a couple of young labourers to do the heavier work, you'll only have to show them what to do.'

As it happens, our son has a shopping trolley business in Bundaberg, and has about fourteen boys working for him, so Col asked if he could let us have two of his best workers for a few weeks. We have always believed in giving youngsters a go and the first lad we hired was Bevan. He worked along with Col for the first week, to get the hang of things, then I became boss-lady.

Being the mother of six children, I am quite an expert at reverse psychology. I knew that if I wanted this boy to work, I needed to work twice as hard as he, because no self-respecting youth wants a grandmother to outwork him.

We got along fine and the building moved so well we put on another lad, seventeen year old Jamie. He was the handyman, a bit ham-fisted, but handy with mechanical things, and had an abundance of common sense. I nicknamed him Bam-

bam, because he didn't know his own strength and was always breaking shovel handles, watering cans, and any tool he had to wield.

At one stage every implement we owned was taped together with grey duct tape, even the plastic bucket. Although the work was backbreaking, we had fun. The boys took turns at ramming earth, trying to outdo each other with their abilities. We had hired a platform lift on which we hoisted each barrowload of earth mixture to the top of the walls, and winding that up became a contest as well. We wore out three rotary hoes and panicked every time we saw Jamie heading out the back with a wrench in his hand.

Col rectified any mistakes we made during the day, such as when the boys were overzealous with the rammer and bent a hurricane rod, or caused the conduits for the electricity to run crooked in the wall.

Within three months we finished the rammed earth walls. In the last one we set a time capsule. Jamie brought in a small tin trunk and we each wrote a note explaining who we were and when we built the walls. We also put in a few objects of interest, such as a cigarette and a gas lighter (Bevan's contribution, being the only smoker), a tea bag, an assortment of coins, and other odds and ends that might not be around when and if the house is ever demolished. Jamie's note explained how he came to be working for us, and he finished it off by stating: 'If you are reading this note, you have just pulled down the last wall we built.'

Once the walls were finished the boys went back to work for our son. We now had to build the interior. Two years before we bought this block, one of my sons, Brad, who is a rigger, had the job of replacing, with steel structures, the hundred-year-old red ironbark beams of the Bundaberg railway bridge across the Burnett River. The firm instructed him to dump the timber in the tip, but having been taught conservation and recycling, long before it became popular, Brad rang Col and explained the situation. Within an hour my husband had borrowed a crane and semitrailer to transport the timber to our property.

When it came to the carpentry work we shopped around for the best cabinet maker in Bundaberg, and found him. Kev



Bette staining timber. Photo courtesy
News Mail

Weier's reputation was impeccable, but he was on the verge of retirement and didn't want to take on any more work, until Col showed him the timber. The challenge was too hard to resist and he agreed to build our kitchen cupboards from it.

We had the strength of our recycled timber tested and were amazed to find it was 74.6 MPA (which means crush resistance). Concrete is 25 MPA. So we had to search for a sawmill prepared to handle it, as its strength often caused damage to the saw blades. Also, because it had been supporting a bridge, there were still bolts buried deep inside some of the beams. We overcame this problem by running a metal detector over each beam before it was cut. When necessary Col dug out the offending bolts and pieces of steel.

We intended using it for floorboards in the living area of the house too, but the expense of having it planed, and tongue-and-grooved was too costly, so we bought a timber planer to reduce the cost. This meant I was able to dress and stain the timber while Col was at work.

After many practice runs, much to my husband's annoyance, I became quite a proficient timber dresser. The noise was horrendous and carried for miles around our estate. Perhaps that was the reason someone decided to steal our

machine. I had chained it to the building uprights and padlocked it before going home one afternoon and the following morning it was gone: chain, padlock and all. That put paid to my career as a sawmill and relieved my battered ears, despite the earplugs I wore.

We had to lay enough floorboards initially, to allow our carpenter to place the cupboards. We worked on them every evening until late. As we didn't own a nail gun, we had to drill each nail hole because the flooring was so strong.

We chose a herringbone pattern for the floor, which, because of the hexagonal shape of the house, enabled us to use most of the timber. The benches we decided to top with black granite.

Meanwhile, I had been landscaping the interior garden from day one, every time I found a moment to spare. It was now time to place the pillars which would separate the glass panels around the garden. The beams are 200 by 200 millimetres square and 3.6 metres high.

This posed a problem because we could not afford the crane necessary to place them, so we decided to revert to older methods as usual. Col cut three saplings from our property and set up a tripod with a block and tackle hanging from the centre. With this we hoisted each beam into place and bolted it to the floor. Then we placed floor to ceiling glass between each beam, with a sliding glass door into the sixteen square metre, hexagonal garden, which by now had a fishpond surrounded by ferns and flowers. We were now ready to construct the roof.

Next time, the roof is constructed.

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SIMPLE ALLERGY-FREE BAKING

by Catherine McIver, Sorrento, Vic.

For people allergic or sensitive to common ingredients such as wheat, rye, milk, yeast, soy and sugar, finding or making suitable bread can be a challenge. Fortunately, there are now many breads, rolls, crispbreads and biscuits without common food allergens. However, more specialised products may only be available in big health food shops in cities and they are often too expensive to eat every day.

So, if you have food allergies or sensitivities, you may well need to bake your own bread or substitutes for bread. This can be a daunting task because the alternative ingredients don't behave like the 'normal' ones. You might find useful recipes and advice in recipe books for people with food allergies and sensitivities, but finding combinations of ingredients from the foods you can eat, and methods that work, is often a matter of trial and error. Here are two basic recipes and suggestions for ingredients to get you started.

BASIC RECIPE

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp sodium bicarbonate
- 2 tsp cream of tartar
- water

Mix dry ingredients and add enough water to give it the same consistency as cake mixture. Bake at 180°C for about 45 minutes or microwave on high for 6–7 minutes.

To make scones, use less water and bake at 250°C for 10 minutes.

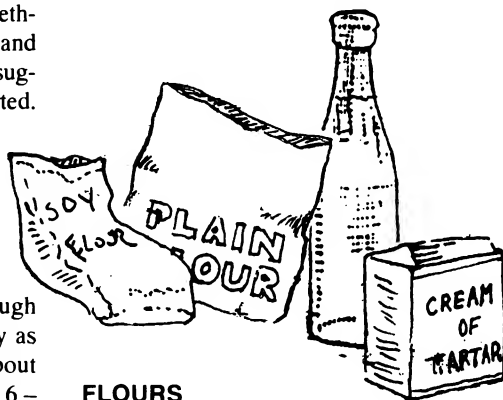
Adding a quarter-cup of vegetable oil or butter may improve the texture. This 'bread' works best with buckwheat or flours containing gluten. Other flours such as rice or millet can be combined with arrowroot or another fine, starchy flour to make the dough stick together better. If the mixture spreads, try using muffin trays or making waffles or pancakes. Heavy flours, such as oatmeal, often make better biscuits than they do bread. Rolls are often more successful than bread. Some flours make bread that bakes hard on the outside before the

middle is cooked. Other flours, such as corn, make bread that tends to disintegrate when you try to slice it. Avoid these problems by making rolls which cook faster and don't need to be cut into slices.

EVEN MORE BASIC RECIPE

- 1 cup flour
- soda water, carbonated mineral water or other fizzy drink

Add enough soda water to the flour to make a slightly runny mixture. Bake at 230°C until it sounds hollow when tapped, or microwave on high for 3–4 minutes. This recipe is also good for pancakes. As well as being quick and simple, this recipe is good for flours that tend to crumble and fall apart. The dough doesn't rise much, but it sticks together better. It was traditionally made with beer.



FLOURS

There are many alternative flours, but they don't have the same qualities as wheat flour. Some are extremely difficult to turn into bread, but can be used for rolls, biscuits, muffins, scones, waffles or pancakes. Wholegrain flours include the husks which contain valuable nutrients and dietary fibre. Grains containing gluten are easiest to work with, they are also most likely to cause allergic reactions. Combining flours often removes the problems they have separately and improves the flavour. If you only react to grains containing gluten, you could try the gluten-free bread and cake mixes designed for people with coeliac disease. These products and alternative flours are

available from health food shops, health food sections of supermarkets and through mail-order services.

Flour Properties

Rye flour: less gluten than wheat, but enough to make it pliable.

Triticale: a hybrid of wheat and rye with the same qualities. If you react to either wheat or rye you'll probably react to triticale.

Barley flour: contains some gluten.

Oatmeal: contains some gluten. Makes heavy bread with a strong taste.

Corn meal: also known as maize meal or polenta. Very coarse and bread tends to crumble when sliced. Rolls work better. Try combining with cornflour.

Cornflour: make sure it is 100 percent corn, as most 'cornflour' is made of wheat. It is very fine and mostly used as a thickener or mixed with other flours.

Millet meal: coarse and tends to crumble. Very nutritious.

Millet flour: finer than millet meal and easier to use.

Brown rice flour: a bit gritty and crumbly by itself, but adding rice bran gives it a smoother texture and makes it stick together better. White rice flour is also available, but lacks the nutritional value of brown rice flour.

Buckwheat flour: despite its name, buckwheat is not related to wheat. It belongs to the rhubarb family. Buckwheat sticks together well and is easy to bake with. It also makes good pancakes. Cinnamon improves the flavour.

Arrowroot: a vegetable flour. Very sticky, which makes it useful for sticking crumbly flours such as millet or rice together.

Soy flour: very high in protein. Full-fat soy flour is best. It is easiest to cook with and the fat contains lecithin. Adding another flour improves the taste. Must be cooked well all the way through as uncooked dough has an unpleasant taste.

Chick pea flour, peasmeal, besan flour: made from chick peas, peas and beans respectively. Related to soy and also needs to be cooked well.

Potato flour: dried potato. Very fine and makes good biscuits. Add it to other flours to make them finer and smoother.

Tapioca flour: on its own makes a clear, jelly-like substance. Can be added to other flours to improve texture.

Spelt flour: an ancient and distant cousin of wheat, spelt is tolerated by some people who cannot tolerate wheat. It contains gluten and is easy to bake with. When substituting spelt flour for wheat flour use one or two extra tablespoonfuls per cup of flour.

Coming soon: flours made from quinoa, teff, kamut and amaranth. These are available overseas and will no doubt start appearing in Australian health food shops.

VARIATIONS

As well as improving the taste, extra ingredients can make the bread, biscuits or whatever, more nutritious and generally more successful. For example, adding pureed fruit or mashed starchy vegetables compensates for crumbly flour.

- Add chopped, pureed or dried fruit such as apricots, pineapple, currants, sultanas or dates.
- Add herbs or spices.
- Add chopped nuts or sunflower,

sesame or caraway seeds.

- Add coconut.
- Instead of water, use fruit juice, peppermint tea, soy milk or goats' milk.
- Replace some of the flour with carob flour.
- Replace some of the flour with mashed pumpkin, potato or other starchy vegetable.

TIPS FOR PEOPLE SENSITIVE TO CHEMICALS

Many people with food allergies and sensitivities, especially those who have problems with a large number of foods, are also sensitive to chemicals. If you are, or think you may be, consider the following ideas.

- Cook with (and drink) filtered water. Even if you have a rainwater tank your water may not be as pure as you would hope – rainwater can be contaminated by pesticide spray drift, pollution from chimneys or from nearby traffic or industry.
- Gas stoves are a major contributor to indoor air pollution and many people are sensitive to gas and gas combustion products. Avoid cooking with gas. If you must use gas, ventilate the kitchen as well as possible.

• Storing food in plastic can contaminate the food and cause reactions in people sensitive to plastics. Glass jars, ceramic containers, aluminium foil and cellophane bags are better choices.

• Nonstick coatings affect some people.

One last point to consider: in experiments overseas a few people have reacted to food cooked in microwave ovens, but have not reacted to the same food cooked conventionally.

Further information, recipes and opportunities to compare notes with other allergic cooks available from:

Allergy and Environmental Sensitivity Support and Research Association Inc (AESSRA), PO Box 298, Ringwood 3134 (Victoria, NSW and Tasmania).

Allergies and Intolerant Reactions Association, PO Box 717, Mawson, ACT 2601.

Allergy and Chemical Sensitivity Association Inc (ACSA), PO Box 104, North Adelaide 5006.

Allergy, Sensitivity and Environmental Health Association, Qld Inc (ASEHA), PO Box 96, Margate 4019.

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A CRACKING GOOD MEAL FROM THE GARDEN

by L. Freegard, Albany, WA.

Have you ever sat back in your chair, with that self-satisfied, cocky attitude? I'm doing that right now. Before you think it's out of being an arrogant, self-confident person, I'll tell you why.

I try many new plants and ideas in my organic garden, and many fail. Sometimes it's my fault, and sometimes plants are just not suited to where I live, but this year I have had some 'wins'.

Firstly, today, after seeing the article on yacon (GR133) I was spurred into digging mine up. Last year I obtained three tiny, kind of shrivelled pieces, and put them in the garden. Up they came, and looked healthy. Your article reminded me that if I did not dig them up, they would soon shoot again, so, despite the tops being still alive, I dug them. Sure enough, as your article said, two different types of root. Some huge fat juicy ones that reminded me of sweet potatoes in shape, and others that looked like purple Jerusalem artichokes, about to shoot. Anyway, from those three tiny bits, I had got a bucketful of each type of root.

That spurred me on to checking my Hon Matai water chestnuts in the dam. Another success. From five smallish ones I'd planted I now had 28 of various sizes, some quite big. I was on a roll. It just so happened that I had some mung bean shoots ready to use – homegrown of course – and some chicken breasts from surplus roosters.



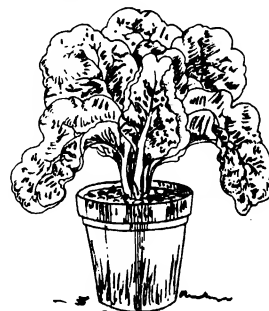
Noodles? Um? Ah? Bread flour (200 g), pinch of salt, and three of my Araucana green-shelled eggs. Knead, knead, knead, until no longer sticky, roll

out until very thin and cut into fine noodle strips. I confess here, I have one of those gadgets like a mini-mangle that rolls the dough out, then cuts it into various thicknesses like fettuccine or tagliatelle. The egg pasta noodles cooked in a couple of minutes and went very well with my chicken stir-fry. With broccoli from the garden, and various other bits and pieces such as leeks, all I had to buy was a dash of oyster and sweet chilli sauce, and of course a handful of flour for the noodles.

I wonder how many people out there miss out on the feeling you can get from having such a cracking good meal, knowing that even the unusual ingredients all came from their own garden?

VEGIES IN TUBS

Many people living in flats and units cultivate vegies in containers on balconies or in courtyards. In Australia and New Zealand where summer temperatures are often high, serious stress is imposed on plants in small containers where the soil is allowed to dry out too quickly and the root temperature permitted to fluctuate too rapidly. Some hardy ornamental plants will tolerate this, but vegetables growing in tubs will not. Ensure that the size of



pots and tubs are as large as the area will allow and water frequently.

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ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.

SPOT WEEDER

This is an ingenious weeding tool that is great for weeding from a standing position, so can be beneficial for anyone who has trouble kneeling or bending, or who may have to weed heavily and does not want to spray. The Spot Weeder works particularly well in heavy clay soils and is good for use with deep-rooted weeds and large clumps: watsonia, docks, thistles and other weeds are easily removed. The Weeder is constructed from stiff bisalloy steel to resist normal levering and the roll-bar allows the tines to lever out the weeds. It is heavily galvanised and will last for years. Cost is \$45 plus \$10 for freight/post and handling within Australia.

Contact: Howard Hodgens, 18 Gilmour Street, Burwood 3125. Ph: 03-9833-4732.



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The VPS Storm Master is an emergency electricity power supply system for home or office, specifically designed for people on the grid. Like UPS systems, it provides protection from power spikes, surges and low voltage for computer equipment. However, the VPS Storm Master also provides power for your lights, fax, television, radio, printer, modem, office equipment and kitchen appliances for as long as the power is off. During times of disruption to electricity supply, whether the cause is storm, flood, accident, or bushfire, the VPS Storm Master will provide solar generated power indefinitely. It features twin, fully isolated inverters, 250 watts each, of pure sine wave output. This means 500 watts of available power with no noise. The unit is ready to use and does not need an electrician to install.

Contact: Vital Earth Company, Ph: 1800-243-626. Fax: 02-4982-6278.

Or website: www.homestead.com/Vital/VPSfront_ns4.html

A CUPPA IN THE BUSH

The Hot2gO is a nifty little kettle that is both portable and cordless. This new Engel product holds 1.1 litres of water and is heated by a disposable butane gas cylinder with two batteries used for ignition. The Australian Gas Association has endorsed the kettle's high level of safety. Features include automatic shut-off when: water has boiled, the kettle is empty, no flame exists, or if the kettle fails. The Hot2gO can be found in camping and 4WD stores and retails for \$139. A carry bag is available for \$34 and the disposable gas cylinders can be purchased separately for around \$5.50.

Contact: Engel Portable Fridge Freezers, 5 Jersey Road, Bayswater 3153, or telephone their information line on 1300-302-653.

USEFUL EQUIPMENT FOR THE SUMMER CAMPING HOLIDAY

Kookaburra Gas and Leisure Products have a huge range of items that campers could find most useful. How about considering these two items for starters? The Solar Shower can be filled with water and placed in the sun for a few hours before you require a good hot shower. The Como chair has adjustable straps so it can be used to sit at a table or to lie back for relaxing. Products are available from Big W, Mitre 10 and major camping or outdoor specialists.

Contact: Kookaburra Gas and Leisure Products, PO Box 585, Strathpine 4500, or telephone 07-3881-1311.

BIO-FARM CERTIFIED ORGANIC LIFE

This is a complete organic food for gardens and lawns with a base of blood and bone, fish meal, seaweed extract and composted animal manure. Nutrients are gradually released after watering, and are available throughout the growing season as they release slowly. Typical analysis is: nitrogen four percent, phosphorus three percent and potassium two percent, with a neutral pH organic base material. This product is great for fruit trees, lawns, vines, flowers, trees, shrubs and vegetables. Or you could add Organic Life and gypsum to your compost to reduce composting time. Depending on freight charges, Bio-Farm Certified Organic Life can be purchased from nurseries at around \$20 per 40-kilo bag.

Contact: Terra Firma Fertilizers, PO Box 36, Beaudesert 4285.
Ph: 1800-818-482.

NONTOXIC FRUIT FLY CONTROL

Fruit fly attacks cost Australian agriculture over \$100 million annually in lost produce. Some fruit flies are native to Australia and others have been introduced and are now out of control with the development of large monoculture crops. Wild May Essential Oils have developed a nontoxic method for killing fruit fly using pheromones in conjunction with traps to attract male flies. Two traps of catch attractant per acre are recommended, with the attractant lasting longer in cool climates. Traps are placed in the shade, upwind of the affected area and, with the eradication of male flies, the females move on from your property in search of mates. Attractant is available in 1, 5, 20 and 205 litre quantities, with a starting price of \$7.50.

Contact Wild May Essential Oils Pty Ltd, 100 Hoff Street, Mt Gravatt 4122, or telephone 07-3349-5283.

INGENIOUS AQUAHARVESTER

by Gwen Leane, Port Augusta, SA.

The reality of the dream was an acre block of arid land covered in saltbush and acacias. There was no water or power and not much of a road either. Not a very prosperous piece of land to call a dream and build Utopia on. We had chosen for our resting place Stirling North, ten kilometres from Port Augusta, South Australia. The area was called the Loudon Extension and just being developed.

Towards the back of the block was an elevation of about two metres. A transportable home was placed on an angle to make the most of the view from this elevation. We cleared the block only enough on which to place the house because of the fragility of the land.

Once the house was established our attention turned to planting up the block. This is where we and our green dream parted company. We dreamed of high-rainfall trees and flowers. A rose garden was established. Annuals of pansies, poppies and primulas were planted on the terraced elevation. It took us several years, many failed plantings, and high water bills to exchange our high-rainfall mentality for an arid-land one. We have since learned to love and understand the Australian arid-land native flora and most of the garden is now planted to arid-land trees and shrubs. The remnants of our green dream are growing over and around the septic drains where a cedar, a Queensland bottle tree, a grevillea, a red gum, and a mandarin tree flourish. In summer an oasis of dense, cool shade is formed.

Our ancestors, when settling the arid zones, believed that the rain followed the plough. They cleared the land of every tree and shrub, innocently devastating the land. We too believed that we could beat the climate and create an oasis with mains water supplementing the 200 – 300 mm rainfall. Thunderstorms and cyclones in the Kimberly area often trigger off much of our summer rainfall. We



Gwen and Bruce devised a water storage system for their arid-zone garden

have one good thing going for us in that the area is practically frost free. Rising costs, a low budget, and a thirsty garden were the enemies to our green dream.

The new plantings consisted of leucosylon – rose and white, torquata, woodwardii, eremophila, Flinder's Range acacias, certain callistemons and hakeas, and *Melaleuca necifolia*. We allowed the *Acacia victoriae*s and a number of other acacia species and natural grasses to continue growing if they were in strategic places. There is no lawn, but quite large areas of ground cover exist which do not need very much water even in 40 degree heat and several months without rainfall.

TURNING THE DIARY'S PAGES

My husband Bruce became a hunter-gatherer, during his holidays, hunting through the bush and gathering seeds that would accept the climate and a limited but highly chlorinated water supply. Today a walk through the garden is like browsing through a diary. Bruce will say: 'This tree came from Amata in the Musgrave Ranges. This tree is Anne's tree because a friend gave me the seedling. Here is a ghost gum from Alice Springs. This hibiscus is from Caernavon Gorge, Queensland.' Thus the memories, people and places are evoked.

Fourteen years later, Bruce is still hunting, gathering the unusual, planting

seeds. Our block has reached its capacity of about 300 trees and shrubs. Each year the neighbours are supplied with seedlings and encouraged to plant them. The footpaths, the roadside verge, and along the rail line corridor, show evidence of Bruce's dedication to growing trees.

To look back towards our house is not to see houses, but a green wall of trees. Even with our changed mentality and greater understanding of the arid zone, which is recognised as arid because 300 mm or less of rainfall a year occurs, water is our constant need.

AN IDEA IS BORN

In the Loudon Extension, houses, like mushrooms, have popped up. The need for a bus service was imperative. So the city council bituminised a road around the Extension. The gradient of the only tarred road drained back to a depression near the rail line, several chains across the street and slightly above our block.

A shower of 8 – 9 mm will cause about 45,000 litres to gather at this point. Such a large mass of water dredged up memories from boyhood days when Bruce used to experiment with ways of siphoning washing water away rather than bucketing it out. He believed that if he applied the same principles to the present situation the water could then be harvested.

With council permission, a ditch digger was hired and a 70 cm ditch put across the street and easement to the depression and a three centimetre polypipe laid. With our eyes trained to the heavens, we eagerly awaited the next shower. Eureka! With some encouragement the water flowed to the block and into drains directing the water to the trees. But soakage and evaporation took a big toll.

One idea led to another and a pump was installed on our block to gather more water quickly. 'But if we could store the water, we could harvest more water,' Bruce reckoned. Two tanks were installed, 22,700 and 27,000 litres, and pipes were adjusted so that when it rained and enough water gathered, the tanks could be filled and the surplus, if any, run out onto the various sections in most need.

But still the amount of water lost worried Bruce, so a second pump was installed and a five-centimetre polypipe inserted to hasten the harvesting and collect the maximum amount of water. The block now exists on harvested water, though for house use mains water is used. Total amount of water harvested in 1998 was over 700,000 litres. Even then, through February and March 1999, no rain fell that could be harvested, and the tanks ran dry. Every year we must plan for a dry spell lasting several months when no rain falls and trees turn their leaves, ground covers look yellow, and everything cries out for a drink.

FOOD TO LIVE

We always dreamed of being self-sufficient by growing much of our fruit and vegetables. The fruit trees and vegetables that, before our water harvesting, had struggled, now grow vigorous and prolific with the help of fowl manure and mulching straw bought by the truckload from farmer friends every two years.

An orchard of apples, apricots, peaches, plums, citrus and figs, and in barren spots quandongs, are grown. Tomatoes, cabbages, capsicums, cucumbers, lettuces, butternuts and melons, all our favourites, grace our table in summer. Sauces, jams and chutneys are cooked and some produce is frozen for winter usage, or what goes for a winter. The fruit trees that don't bear are dug out and new ones planted. All must bear and nothing is allowed to waste.



The arid-zone plants are as beautiful as those in higher rainfall areas; it's a matter of adjusting your expectations.

HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS

Five or six years have passed since the harvesting of water began and many of the trees are tall and stately. When we first took over the block, there were only two species of honeyeater, a family of babblers, wrens, a mistletoe bird, finches and possibly pardalotes, and the ubiquitous sparrows, swallows and kites. Now added to the list are wattlebirds and a third species of honeyeater with a fourth species visiting in the spring. Parrots visit from time to time, and the yellow-throated miner bird has lately set up house. There are crested pigeons and the coo of shy doves can be heard. Twice yearly on their migratory flight north and south, the beautiful rainbow bee-eaters visit and treat us to a display of aerial acrobatics, especially if it has just rained.

Last spring six bird species nested on the block, the greatest number since we arrived. When the birds nested, we believed that they called our place home and felt satisfaction in providing a habitat to their liking. The willy wagtail is one who is not allowed entry. Each spring he visits to spy out a territory and each year he is hounded out. Last spring he put up a valiant effort to stay over about a week. Every morning his 'sweet pretty creature' could be heard in the garden, but by night his cheery song would be over in the neighboring block. Finally the 'sweet pretty creature' was heard no more. One wonders why this

gorgeous creature is so hated by his peers. The latest arrival is the grey butcherbird. Supremely confident and fearless of humans, it warbles beautifully. To further encourage our feathered friends, Bruce put nesting boxes in the trees ready for spring in the hope of attracting parrots and other species needing hollows. While the parrots ignored the makeshift homes, there were signs of use by others. Three watering points have been set up which are visited for daily baths. We do not feed the birds, as we did not want to make them too dependent on an artificial source.

NOT FOR A MILLION DOLLARS

We would not swap our garden that has challenged our ingenuity, and altered our mentality of a high-rainfall expectation. We have been enriched by exploring the native arid plants and finding them as beautiful and eye catching as those in the higher rainfall zones.

It is one thing to be self-supporting where the soil is good and the rainfall high, but quite another in the arid zones. Many a person has been discouraged and given up, seeking greener pastures for their Edens. There is more we could do, but creaking bones and stiffening muscles of the 60s and 70s are reminders that we have reached our potential and further expansion will stretch our capacity beyond itself. Our dream is on target and it is still green, though of a different hue and content than the one we expected.



DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller.

Summer has never been a favourite time of year, but one pleasure I do enjoy is the assortment of scents that assail the senses when the heat fades at evening. No doubt the higher temperatures intensify the volatile oil in leaves and herbage, especially in native species. Here, the rich piquancy of a blue gum pervades all corners of the garden, freshening tired warm evenings. Out around the poultry housing the faint fragrance of freshly mown hay lingers, particularly late at night, and is the first smell to welcome me home when getting out of the car to open the gate. The other scent strongly associated with summer is the inimitable earthy aroma created when watering vegetables or herbs. It's almost worth gardening just to be privy to the complex bouquet of recently watered tomato plants and basil. I may be guilty of not allowing time to smell the daisies, however, come hot weather, I'm always happy to stand a minute and savour summer's sweet fragrance.

Odoriferous delights don't necessarily abound in the poultry keeper's world, more often than not summer months are distinguished by intermittent odious incidents. A few weeks back it was a carcass, well camouflaged until nosed out, the result most likely of heat stress. More recently the pong of an exploded egg has tainted the air. You'd think the dog would get in under the bushes and deal with old eggs and hatching debris, but nothing would induce her to partake of her 'family', however old and unrecognisable. When the source of the smell can't be pinpointed and so removed, nature must take its course, a speedy process when the temperature is high.

This time last year I was summoned to Melbourne to remove the decomposing remnants of some critter that was permeating Suni's house and making it unfit for habitation. Fortunately the worst of it was over by the time I extricated the remains. My last few weeks have been blighted by a similar situation and I'm sure I'm not the only GR devotee to be so afflicted. It began with a nasty smell in the kitchen. A mouldy orange, rotten potato, even an overlooked dirty saucepan? No, house-keeping skills appeared fine. Could it be an egg in the pile of full cartons on the table? I sniffed these until breathless and faint. Still the nasty smell remained. A

thorough examination of the verandah elicited nothing, nor did the investigation by torchlight of the dubious area under the house. I felt like a bloodhound sniffing here and there, but all to no avail. The stench finally could be narrowed to the kitchen and I think belonged to a deceased possum that had passed over somewhere in the chimney. If the fire could have been safely lit without the risk of igniting the tinder-dry countryside, I would have struck a match and incinerated whatever was there. The long hours at work with deadline demands provided the perfect excuse for avoiding the kitchen; by now only a faint smell remains. I'm glad I was supportive to Suni last year when she was poned out, such an all-pervading smell is ghastly. There is a positive note to it of course, one less possum to be a nuisance.

For years I've moaned about obstacles to successful gardening: the chooks, cockies, blackbirds, and my friends the phalangers. As well, there have been continual shortages of water. The garden would be thriving and bountiful when summer commenced, but a few weeks later battling to survive because water could not be spared for it. After enduring endless trials and tribulations with bores, pumps and lack of water, last year I'd had enough. Not only did I purchase a 3000 gallon tank for emergencies in the second part of last year, I went out and bought a block in a nearby town so I could establish a decent vegetable garden. I remember my dad disappearing off to an allotment garden some blocks away when I was young because our backyard was too small. I too now have my allotment, or rather, 'town' garden, and though the driving to and from is a pain the pleasure and satisfaction easily outweigh any inconvenience.

While musing on the sort of garden to establish, I noticed a neighbour's little vegie plot and was surprised by the netting protecting seedlings. What could possibly cause depredation in the safe confines of town? 'Starlings and blackbirds and even the occasional cat,' the neighbours volunteered. 'And don't expect to harvest any almonds because the parrots destroy them.' How disappointing, I thought I'd left all that behind.

A friend has erected a fully enclosed site for my garden, netting in the side and

covering the top with shade cloth. It looks a cross between a tennis court and a game bird enclosure and has probably been the subject of much speculation. I'll need to consume or process every single thing I ever produce to get my money back, but simply don't care. Some of the beds are already producing, others are piled with manure and breaking down in readiness for winter sowing. To combat the weeds, discarded GRs have been put down and then covered with the rakings from the goose yard and under the peppercorn trees. This in turn has been mulched with mown grass. Silverbeet and lettuce, along with numerous herbs, have been plentiful for weeks, and the first tomatoes ripened this week. A variety of other vegies are in different stages of growth. The best thing is that plants seem to want to grow, though I'm sure the protection from numerous predators also helps. There are a few fruit trees on the block, but the birds beat me to the harvest. One day the cherry plum was so laden a branch actually broke off; five days later not a single piece of fruit remained. Pruning and protection will have to be priorities in the coming year.

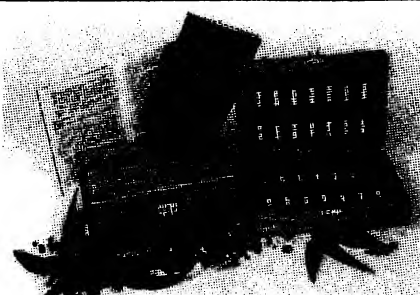
When I popped in after New Year to see friends with a property around the corner, they too had suffered the ravages of birds in their orchard. They have a great array of fruit trees, grapes and olives, and the cockatoos had cleaned out all the ripened soft fruits, destroyed the apple and pear crops, and were attacking both green figs and the olive trees. Understandably, my friends were most upset. 'Ask your readers,' Lucy pleaded. 'There must be ways of preventing this damage.' The cunning birds are aware the friends are not resident all the time and take advantage of this. Mary, our GR editor, suggested planting seed-producing species nearby, to lure the birds away. Netting can be used and Lucy did in fact have some old lace curtains protecting fruit, but the birds shredded these. Commercial bird netting is one solution, though cost is prohibitive, especially when trees are large as many of Lucy's are. How do GR readers cope with this problem?

It's a pity a dog as smart as Maria can't be trained to guard trees. She in fact does warn off hawks, going so far as to scramble up tree trunks when they are

perched above. A Maremma, through instinct, will bark and hold off anything that threatens its wards. Just as well too, as foxes are bad again. A little Guinea in an out of the way spot up the paddock disappeared, and more recently one of the goslings went AWOL during daylight hours.

Maria's dedication has aided and abetted much of the season's goose multiplication, plus enabled a few turkey hens to set in quite vulnerable places. Clutches of both goslings and poults appeared in late December, neither being expected. More poults hatched this week, the last till springtime, but the fowls are eluding my attempts to prevent reproduction. It seems each week a hen turns up with a retinue of fluffy chicks and I scratch my head wondering where on earth the mother was sitting. The wilderness in the backyard is a favourite site, especially as I'm away during the day and they can lay and strut around undetected. There are at least two hens and families wreaking havoc on the remains of the vegie garden, any attempts to capture them being foiled by birds going in all directions. Thank goodness I've relocated the vegies! Did I write I was reducing numbers a few issues ago? Clearly the farmyard hens missed reading that copy!

Although it's too hot and too early in the year to get right into gardening, bulb companies are posting out their autumn catalogues. The tulips and other gorgeous exotica tempt me, but really, potato onions and elephant garlic come first. You can't eat tulips. I'll have to show these catalogues to Suni, as she is becoming greener and keener. We share regular sorties into the hardware shop and come out with plants, forgetting the sandpaper and nails. You know what she will say when she thumbs the catalogues: 'Really Megg, you've got to have beautiful things around you, and what's attractive about an onion? We should order some tulips.'



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PENPALS

Looking for male/female penpals with brown and hazel eyes, aged 10 years old.

Emilee (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

My name is Eve. I'm looking for a penpal over the age of 15, male or female. I like reading, walking my dog and my favourite bands are Boyzone and Westlife. Please write to me if you share any of the same interests or, even if you don't.

Eve (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hi, my name is Jessica and I'm turning 10 in the year 2000. I am looking for a friend around my own age to write to. I like singing, reading, drawing and playing the recorder.

Jessica (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hi, my name is Emma. I am 7 years old. I would like a penpal aged 6 - 8. My interests are writing letters, playing with my dogs and riding our pony.

Emma (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hi my name is Alynda and I am 13 years old. I love art, drama, swimming, horse riding and most music. I don't mind how old or who you are, just write. A reply is promised.

Alynda (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hello, my name Jemadeekara. I am nearly 13 and would like penpals aged between 11 and 15. I do home schooling and my interests include animals, reading, writing, swimming, some sports, music, drama, acting and more. I will reply to all letters.

Jemadeekara (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hello my name is Kirrawani. I am 11 1/2. I really like animals and I love looking after orphaned natives. I also like swimming, reading, nature study and more. I do home schooling and I live in Tasmania.

Kirrawani (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Hi, my name is Jessica. I am eight years old. I would like a female penpal aged seven or eight years old. I am a Pooh fan. I like novels. I am in grade two. I have a ten year old sister. I live in the country.

Jessica W (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

I recently put an ad in GR for penpals, who I love writing to, however, a lovely girl by the name of Lisa forgot to include her address. please contact me again.

Crystal (137)

C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

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Your First Pony

The price of \$23.45 incl postage, as advertised on p66, is incorrect. Correct price for this information-packed title is just \$17.50 incl postage. See p82 for ordering details.

Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. We no longer distribute books for other publishers so if you're interested in buying any of the books described here, please order them through your nearest bookstore.

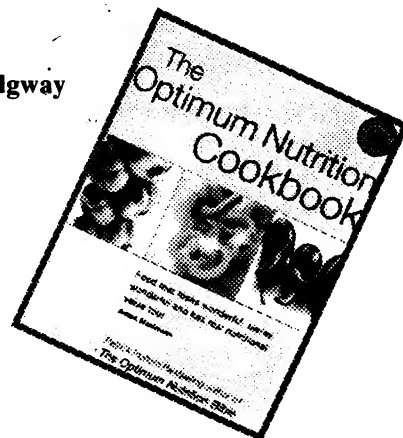
★ FEATURE TITLE ★

THE OPTIMUM NUTRITION COOKBOOK – Patrick Holford & Judy Ridgway

This cookbook combines two most important considerations when it comes to food: taste and nutrition. Both writers have expertise in one or the other and have combined their respective talents to give us some great recipes that will taste good and do us good too. It would be hard to resist many of the appealing dishes set out here. The recipes have been coded so it is easy to eat the right balance of fruit and vegetables, carbohydrate, protein and fat. The colour photos are inviting and many of the meals are also suitable for vegans or vegetarians.

Another complementary book that is being released concurrently by the publisher is *Optimum Nutrition for Babies and Young Children* (p/b, 184pp, RRP \$24.95) by Lucy Burney, a well-respected nutrition consultant. She believes the first few years of a child's life are crucial to long-term wellbeing. The book contains useful recipes together with sound advice on all aspects of child nutrition.

H/b, 223pp, Hodder Headline Australia, Level 22/201 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Ph: 02-8248-0825. RRP \$45.



THE FLOWER REMEDY BOOK

Jeffrey Garson Shapiro

The British physician Edward Bach's remedies became well known during the 1970s and 80s. Flower essences from other parts of the world were beginning to evolve at the same time. Today, essences have become a common and safe healing tool used by lay people and a wide range of health practitioners. Shapiro has provided a comprehensive listing of specific mental, emotional and physical symptoms, together with a range of flower remedies and the unique properties each essence contains for use in relieving specific symptoms.

P/b, 282pp, North Atlantic Books, P O Box 163, Tea Gardens 2324. Ph: 02-4997-0811. RRP \$39.95.

COTTAGE FLOWERS

Katrina Hall

Cottage Flowers gives practical and inspirational information on how to use stencils in numerous different combinations around the home. Ideas are simply laid out and comprehensively explained, making the projects suitable for both beginners and those more experienced with crafts. The inexpensive results are impressive. Six projects are detailed, together with a set of reusable stencils. *Cottage Flowers* is one in a series of eight titles on the theme of stenciling. Other titles in the series are: *Flowers & Leaves, Classic Borders, Nursery Designs, Fruits & Flowers, Art Nouveau, Farmhouse Kitchen* and *Seashore Designs*.

P/b, 32pp+6pp, Merehurst Ltd, Murdoch Books, 45 Jones Street, Ultimo 2007. Ph: 02-9692-2349. RRP \$12.95.

SUN, MOON AND STARS

Mary Hoffman & Jane Ray

The whole family can settle down to enjoy this richly illustrated storybook. It retells some of the ancient myths and legends that were formed by people from around the world in an effort to make sense of the all-consuming sky with its sun, moon and stars. This book beautifully relays various eternal mysteries from all corners of the globe, using a unique blend of ideas and images. You can find out about the moon-children (a Norse myth), the heavenly archer (a Chinese legend) or the seven sisters (an Australian myth) to name just a few.

P/b, 77pp, Dolphin Publishing, Allen & Unwin, P O Box 8500, St Leonards 2065. Ph: 02-8425-0100. RRP \$14.95.

IN TOUCH WITH THE EARTH

Useful Weeds at our Doorstep

Pat Collins

This self-published book covers 40 weeds growing around the Hunter Valley area of NSW and identifies a range of practical uses for them. The author has selected those she believes to be the most medicinally useful. In addition to detailed medicinal tips, recipes and farm and garden uses are also outlined. This is a fascinating read, written by a practical woman who has worked on the land for years.

P/b, 140pp, Total Health & Education Centre, 196 Bridge St, Muswellbrook 2333. Ph: 02-6541-1884. RRP \$24.

PARASITES

Lisa S Newman ND, PhD

A series of eight natural-pet-care pocket guides covering a range of issues relating to the wellbeing of our cats and dogs is now available. *Parasites* is one just of these titles and looks at fasting and detoxification followed by appropriate nutrition as ways of addressing parasite infestations. This pocket guide also outlines useful antiparasitic herbs and remedies, and discusses individual parasitic disorders, related symptoms and how to deal with each of them specifically. Other titles are: *Skin & Coat Care, Allergies, Natural Cat, Natural Dog, Nutrition, Arthritis, Training without Trauma*.

P/b, 126pp, Crossing Press, Banyan Tree Book Distributors, 13 College Road, Kent Town 5067. Ph: 08-8363-4244. RRP \$13.95.

WHEELBARROWS, CHOOKS & CHILDREN

A Gardener's Life – Margaret Simons

These stories about Margaret Simons' ever-evolving garden and family life in the Blue Mountains have a lovely down-to-earth style about them. She lives with her partner and two young children, in a constant process of gradual transformation to what was their ubiquitous 'renovator's dream' and a acre of blackberry-infested sandy, acid soil. We are given glimpses into the wonders, disappointments, chaos and joy experienced by the writer as she makes this journey through the seasons with her family.

P/b, 136pp, New Holland Publishers, 40 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest 2086. Ph: 02-9365-8448. RRP \$19.95.

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HOW TO ADVERTISE

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MOONAN FLAT, 3 b/r house on 1½ ac, close to Barrington Tops, f/trees, plenty of water, garage & workshop, front & back verandahs, primary school. Bus to high school. Great weekender. \$60,000. Ph: 02-6546-3128.

FIVE ACRES, HOUSE, 2 b/r + loft, perm crk, mains power, in picturesque valley 20 mins Kyogle. \$126,000. Ph: 03-5985-3768.

TWO-BEDROOM CABIN, 80.3 ha in picturesque valley surrounded by nat pks, 45 mins Merimbula airport. Electricity, ph, sewerage, fully fenced, part irrigated pastures, 180 wine grapes, orchard. \$172,000. Or, 40 ha fenced \$52,000. Ph: 02-6496-7009.

NORTH COAST: scenic 37 ac, cottage, alt power, 4 dams, 25 mins beaches & Grafton, 5 mins to Tucabia. \$75,000. Ph: Alex, 02-6644-8174, mobile 015-611-712.

MID NORTH COAST NSW, Upper Taylors Arm, secluded 412 ac river flats surrounded by mountains, some r/forest, perm water, yards, paddocks, tanks, pump, basic farm equip, good growing area. Old farmhouse needs renovation, own timber avail. Power, solar, internet connect. Asking \$170,000. Ph: 08-9228-8408.

BLUE STAR, A SPIRITUAL ECO-VILLAGE, between Nimbin & Murwillumbah. Universal: open for all believings. Shares for sale. \$42,000. Total 11 dwellings. Many communal facilities & good infrastructure. Creek, abundant water & 100 ac fertile undulating land. Beautiful scenery & surrounded by nat pks. Ph: 02-6689-7282. <http://ecovillage.one.net.au>

E-mail: ecovillage@one.net.au

CRYSTAL VALE, NEAR TYALGUM, 30 mins to Murwillumbah, 8 green ac near Border Ranges Nat Pk, partly forested, landscaped garden, f/trees, partly fenced, irrigated ac, soil tested for organic agriculture. Magnificent views of the mountains & Mt Warning. Red cedar home, 2 b/rs, loft, polished timber floors, wide verandahs, c/port. Fully self-suff: solar system, 240V wiring, generator backup, 2 x 5000 gal water tanks, 1 r/water, 1 from perm crk. Established, well-run company title. \$150,000 ONO. Call owner, 08-8331-8805.

NORTH-EASTERN RIVER COUNTRY NSW. Kings Plain Nat Pk surrounds our 130 ac privacy plus acreage. Permanent spring-fed dam, open country, 1000 year old grass trees, giant rocks, magnif panoramic views over property & Kings Plains. Located back of the Great Divide just 4 hrs from Byron Bay & Coffs Harbour. \$65,000. Sellers terms, \$10,000 deposit, \$180 pw. Ph: Howard, 02-6646-3733.

INVERELL, 200 ACRES, running down to perm flowing crk with great fishing holes. Very picturesque rolling country with a great landscape of tall trees, rocks, view to the nat pk. Ideal for a group or family to build an alternate lifestyle as no immediate neighbours. \$85,000 full price. Owner terms to any group or persons with \$15,000 deposit, \$200 pw till paid. Ph: Howard, 02-6646-3733.

WOOLGOOLGA, lge 3 b/r older style house on ¾ ac block, ocean & reserve views, trees, 3 mins drive to beach & shops, 15 mins to Coffs Harbour. Take over tenants or move in yourself. I work in Queensland and must sell, make an offer around \$88,000. Jutta, 07-4093-2733.

KALANG VALLEY, NEAR BELLINGEN, 10 ac riverflats, organic certification possible, absolute riverfront, deep private swimming hole, lge open plan hand-crafted timber/river rock home, 4 yrs old, antique leadlight windows, fully serviced. solar/elec/fuel/h/water, river & r/water tanks, lge timber cabin, shed, subtropical setting in the midst of wonderful sml community. \$229,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6655-0298.

LAND TWENTY MINUTES FROM WINDSOR NSW 40 ac with running water & lge trees. North facing building site. Some flat land. Surrounded by state forest. \$80,000. Ph: owner, 02-4575-5242.

DRAKE, NORTHERN NSW, 143 ac native forest with livable 12 m x 6 m zincalume shed. Solar lighting, solar HWS, LPG stove, LPG fridge. ph connected. Ideal retreat or base for further development. Good 2WD access. Adjacent to Girard State Forest. Plenty of water & wildlife. \$60,000 ONO. Ph: agent, 02-6736-1136 BH, 02-6737-3610 AH.

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE NEW SOUTH WALES

WOMBAYAN CAVES AREA, 600 ac, comfortable solid brick home, totally equipped for fully self-sustainable lifestyle! Located in tranquil valley with waterfalls & swimming holes, 2 1/2 hrs to Sydney. \$219,000. Ph: 02-4284-4074.

NORTH OF TAMWORTH, 2 double brick shops & above a flat, in Barraba. Big enough to swing a cat. \$69,000. Ph: 02-6782-1585.

MICHELAGO, 50 km sth of Canberra, organic, permaculture designed 100 ac, nth facing, 60% excel fertile red loam cropping & lucerne country. All excel grazing in 600 mm rainfall. Four dams, waterhole & bore with windmill for house, garden & orchard reticulation. Council approved solar passive 20 m x 10 m transportable house in nth facing sun trap area, needing completion. Farm sheds under construction. Two hrs to snowfields & 2 hrs to the coast. \$175,000. Ph: John, 019-442-977.

MID NORTH COAST, 45 mins west of Kempsey, 100 ac fenced, mostly grazing country. Power, water, ph in comfortable dwelling. Permanent crk frontage, 5000 gal water tank. Spectacular mountain views. \$82,000. Ph: 02-4971-2193.

ELANDS, 1/2 share in 100 ac, many building sites, zoned rural, good soil, perm water. \$48,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6286-2617, 0412-884-042.

NIMBIN - 2 to 4 b/r pole frame. Ph: owner, 02-6689-1320. \$195,000. Full details & photo. www.australiarealty.com Ref: B130018.

QUEENSLAND

TARA, DARLING DOWNS, 43 ac heavily timbered, suit pole house. \$6000 ONO. Ph: 0407-970-702 anytime.

ATHERTON TABLELANDS, QLD, 42 ha r/forest hideaway, secluded, private, comfortable dwelling. Abundant flora & fauna, eg - tree climbing kangaroos, cassowary etc. A very rare property. Price \$179,000. Contact: Richardson & Wrench, Malanda, on 07-4096-5666.

RUSSELL ISLAND QLD, must sell urgently, well located corner block, shops, power/ph/water, 1/2 hr from Brisbane CBD, best offer over \$1000. Ph: 02-6262-6163 AH.

THIRTY ACRE MOUNTAIN TOP, overlooking state forest - 1 hr Brisbane, Forest Hill. Power, ph, easy 4 wheel access. \$85,000. Vendor terms - \$5000 deposit, \$200 pw till paid. Ph: 02-6646-3733, or 07-3262-6050.

DARLING DOWNS, beautiful native bushland, wildlife, 32 1/2 ac. Three hrs to Brisbane. Perfect getaway location. \$30,000 ONO, will consider swap for Vic or southern NSW location. Ph: owner, 03-5767-2397.

SAPPHIRE, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND GEM-FIELDS, 2 b/r home on 1/2 ac f/hold land. Power, town water, nothing to spend. \$65,000 or exchange for acreage in the Gympie Hinterland. Ph: owner, 015-119-432.

PLACING AN AD?

See page 74 for details

RIVER FRONTAGE 5 ac on isolated stretch of Condamine River near Warwick. Tall river gums, rich soil, 2 hrs Brisbane/Gold Coast. \$48,000. Owner terms - \$2000 dep, \$85 pw. Howard, 02-6646-3733, or Wayne 07-3262-6050.

GIN GIN, income producing 26 ac, 3 b/r mod home, all facilities, 1 1/4 ac table grapes, 6 ac sml crops & cut flowers, machinery, good bore, valley views. \$145,000. Ph: 07-4157-1004 AH.

TRANQUIL SECLUDED PIECE OF PARADISE: 56 fertile ac, 15 mins from Gympie, 30 mins to beautiful Tin Can Bay and only 40 mins to magnif Rainbow Beach, gateway to Fraser Island. 200 estab fruit & nut trees. Strong durable sheds - feed, hay, storage 14 x 8 m, goat 11 x 10 m, chicken 11 x 5 m, duck 7 x 5 m with ponds. Stockyards with headbale & ramp, approx 30 ac grazing, 26 forested & fenced, 3 dams. Open plan mud brick cottage in fenced yard. Farm worked with biodynamic preparations. \$199,000. Ph: 07-5483-3726.

HILL TOP HIDEAWAY - 40 ac overlooking state forest, 1 hr Brisbane, 1 1/2 hrs Gold Coast located at Forest Hill between Brisbane & Toowoomba. River soil, mostly virgin forest, ideal dam/lake sites. Vendor terms - \$5000 dep, \$200 pw till paid. Ph: 02-6646-3733, or 07-3262-6050.

PERFECT RETREAT, GATTON, 5 ac natural open country, scattered shade trees, 1 hr Brisbane. Power, ph. \$32,000. Owner terms to anyone. \$500 deposit, \$65 pw. A new lge hay shed extra \$20 pw. Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

FORCED SALE, 175 ac close to Texas, 3 b/r fibro house, machinery sheds, stables, cement floored pig shed - cattle yards, 2 lge 3 sml dams, 500 olive trees, some 5 year old, power, ph, all-weather road, must sell urgently. \$130,000. Ph: 07-4653-1232.

FORTY ACRES, reliable bore, dam, natural & improved pastures, 7 paddocks, fences OK, sml yards. Comfortable 2 b/r built-in shed, power, ph, machinery & feed shed. Lots of trees surround, 25 mins Biloela, 5 mins Thangool. \$99,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4658-1771.

'ROSEGUMS' situated in the Dawson Valley near thriving Moura. It offers a secluded lifestyle in a beautiful forest country as an 80 ha f/hold grazing property, orchard (365 trees), ample water for irrigation, modern home, big shed with fruit drying facility, coolroom & many extra features. \$285,000. Ph: 07-4997-1055.

RETAIL OPPORTUNITY IN YOUR FRONT YARD, lge highset Queenslander, VGC, on crk frontage with separate 5 square shop on highway frontage in historic tourism area, perm water supply, r/forest & estab garden, 1 hr Sunshine Coast. Price \$89,950. Ph: 07-3282-4516.

CHANCE OF A LIFETIME, 5 ac on crk, power & ph, great views down the valley, 10 mins to local town and 1 1/2 hrs to Brisbane. Full price \$32,000 seller terms, \$500 full deposit & \$85 pw. Ph: Ian, 07-4662-2981, or Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

NOOSA - RURAL HIDEAWAY, suit communal style living, 85 ac of semicleared good deep soil land, 2 lge fish-stocked dams, huge 2 storey main house with 3 smaller cottages, 20 mins to Noosa, 5 mins to Eumundi Markets, backs onto state forest, Steiner School nearby, complete privacy. \$400,000 ONO. Jenny Evans, 85a Memorial Drive, EUMUNDI 4562.

DELANEY'S CREEK - WOODFORD, folk festival mins away, 5 ac, lge 4 b/r home, town water, dble garage, 20 x 20 shed, stable, fully fenced, 2 paddocks, asphalt driveway, beautiful & quiet area, views all round, walk to school. \$210,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5495-2116 AH.

CHILDERS, SE Qld, 159 ac, Colorbond house, power, ph, water tanks, machinery shed, crk & spring-fed dam. Part fenced, mainly bush, sandy soil. Highway frontage. \$135,000. Also adj block, 123 ac, 2 bores, crk, packing shed, power, ph. \$95,000. Video avail. Ph: 07-4126-2999.

PERFECT QUEENSLAND HIDEAWAY, 21 ac natural pine forest, all-timber weekender cabin with elec & ph connected. All overlooking extra lge perm dam & hidden in middle of the forest. \$42,000. Seller terms to anyone with \$5000 full deposit & \$120 pw. Ph: Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

ONE HUNDRED ACRES FOREST near Dalby Queensland, rugged natural crk fronting undulating open forest country, wildlife galore, 2 1/2 hrs Brisbane. \$32,000, or with new lge hayshed \$34,600. Wayne, 07-3262-6050, Ian, 07-4662-2981.

NATURAL OPEN GRASSLANDS and forest 1250 ac, with long frontage to perm crk & many lge perm natural lagoons. Old shearing shed, power & ph avail. Located 3 hrs Brisbane/Gold Coast/Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Full price \$100 per ac (\$125,000). Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

NO ONE WILL EVER FIND YOU at Benteigh Station, 650 ac, virgin open forest teeming with wildlife. Home built to lock-up in middle of property, 10 ac of lagoons & long frontage to perm Wilkie Crk. Located 3 hrs Brisbane/Gold Coast. \$125,000. Owner will consider home anywhere as full deposit & seller finance balance @ \$135 pw. Wayne 07-3262-6050.

RELAXED LIFESTYLE, clean air, historic Mt Morgan, 1 hr Capricorn Coast. Put your style dwelling on this neat serviced allotment 2 1/2 ac paddock. Yards, stock loading ramp, crk, sml worm farm, deep garden soil. Unique location, numerous possibilities for self-suff/hobby/retirement. \$19,500. Ph: 07-4922-4219.

MT TAMBORINE TWENTY MINUTES, 45 mins Brisbane/Gold Coast, 9 ac gentle undulating property close to conservation park at Logan Village. Unique professionally designed timber/brick 3 b/r, 2-storey house with spotted gum floors, silky oak doors/windows & jarrah kitchen, verandahs. Northerly aspect, fenced, solar HWS, rain & bore water, 2 dams, c/port & shed (20 x 10 m), office & ph. Estab orchards & bushland. Sealed rd, school bus, 15 mins to Logan hosp, school, college, shopping centre, hotel, etc. Private & peaceful. \$410,000. Ph: 07-5546-3797 AH, or 0418-768-239.

BUNDABERG, 40 ac of lightly treed land close to 2 beaches, bore water on property. Further inquiries: 03-5962-4914.

Don't forget to include your area code with your phone number. It's best to set it out as 00-0000-0000.

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE QUEENSLAND

AGNES WATER/1770, 40 ac, quiet, natural bush block. Spring-fed dam, crk, access to power/ph, sml orchard establishing, plenty grass trees, 20 mins from gorgeous, unspoiled beaches & nat pks, (snorkelling, diving, surfing), 1 hr to Bundaberg. \$37,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5025-3280.

BOYNE VALLEY, 90 km Gladstone, picturesque 4000 ac GHPL, house, solar power, mains power avail, crk through centre of prop. Presently running cattle & horses, would also suit tourism and/or f/trees. \$290,000. Ph: evenings, 07-4974-1288.

FORTY ACRES UNDEVELOPING, fenced, new house, views, gardens, sheds, yards, trees, timber, dams, tractor, machinery, pumps. Close Warwick. \$165,000. Ph: 07-4667-4940.

SECLUDED WILDLIFE SANCTUARY: 117 ac, huge 8 yr old 4 b/r, 2 bathroom, split block home, 40 ac 6 ft chain fence, 2 good bores, 2 bay shed, tame wallabies/possums. Viable tourism prospects. 30 mins from Mackay. No dogs or cats. \$225,000. Ph: 07-4947-3271.

BUNDEBERG AREA, Queenslander, 3 b/r on 5 ac, lge Tas oak kitchen, sep dining, lounge, sun-room, fans, air-cond, polished floors, verandahs 4 sides, 3 tanks, LUG, dog fenced, 4 yards, dam, pool, 5 mins to schools & Gin Gin township. Lovely gardens, lots of wildlife & trees. \$138,000. More info call Mick & Kim: 07-4157-4348.

NERANG/MT TAMBORINE foothill, fantastic undulating treed 7 ac property. Great views of Mt Tamborine and Stradbroke Is. Property incl 1800 sqm. Eco wire structure, u/g power & ph, cemented dam, grey water reed pond, extensive rock work incl 3 herb spirals, 20 ft container, '74, Toyota 4WD, 5000 lt tank & water shed, lge house area, 60 mins Brisbane, 35 mins to beaches and 15 mins to Nerang. Private sale asking \$110k. Ph: 0411-225-672.

VICTORIA

VIOLET TOWN, TWO ACRES, power, ph, dam, workshop, 3 b/r, c/van, annexe, shed, HWS, septic, well-fenced, heaps trees, birdlife and gardens, \$35,000. Ph: 03-5798-1421.

EAST GIPPSLAND, 15 mins east of Lakes Entrance, 30 secluded, cleared ac with perm crk running through property. Adjacent to state forest, 4 b/r cedar home, solar & generator power, ample shedding & new stockyards. \$180,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5155-7257.

FOR SALE, 100 ac in the upper Murray, 5 paddocks, seasonal crk, plenty of shedding, building permit paid for. Close to sml town, hospital & school. Some hill & bush, some crk flats, good soil. \$75,000 ONO. Bare. Established orchard & vegie patch. Ph: 02-6037-1364.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND INVESTMENT, 232 ac bushland with 6000 radiata pine trees first planted 1983; 3 b/r house ¾ built, lge natural waterhole. Permanent employment for right person or part time for 2 or 3. Edenhope-Harrow area \$88,000. Ph: 03-5587-7207.

DEADLINES: GR138 – FEB 29TH
GR139 – APRIL 30TH

OPPORTUNITY: HOUSE MELBOURNE, 15 mins CBD via freeway. Two sections (one fully furnished). Live in one, rent other to pay mortgage (brings \$21k pa). Immediate earnings. Suit couple or single person. Sale price market value. Approximately \$200k – 250k. Write: ADVERTISER, PO Box 5011, MORELAND WEST LPO 3055.

EAST GIPPSLAND, WATTLE CIRCLE, near Ensay on Omeo Hwy. Charming 1 (big) b/r brick/timber cottage, 22 ac opposite Tambo River. Spacious slate floored kitchen, walk-in pantry, wood & gas stoves o/fire. Solar power, inverter, generator, Telstra radio ph, huge shed, ample water storage & pump access to Tambo. An hour from snow country or Gippsland Lakes. \$68,500. Owners transferred Brisbane. Ph: 07-3848-0353, or contact John Riches at Elders, Bairnsdale, 03-5152-3037.

GIPPSLAND LAKES, 20 ac bush block with lake frontage & safe sandy beach. Fully fenced, c/van, building permit, wildlife. Great escape place. \$85,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5156-2044.

CLUB TERRACE, EAST GIPPSLAND, 'Riversong', 97 ac on Bemm River, 20 ac cleared, rest native forest. Fertile soils, excel growing climate, 2 – 3 b/r comfortable double brick house, s/c/stove, gas stove, wood heater. Extensive gardens, sheds, tractor, slasher, ride-on mower. Many mature ornamental, fruit & nut trees. \$168,000. Ph: Rhee, 03-5158-3243 evenings.

NORTH-EAST VICTORIA, 5 ac, 3 b/r brick veneer, sml fruit & nut orchard, inexhaustable groundwater of excel drinking quality supplying all household purposes, nestled in arboreal environment, on major hwy en route to ski slopes, 5 mins to major town. \$169,000. Ph: 03-5725-1726.

CASTLEMAINE AREA, opportunity to buy into permaculture dream village designed by David Holmgren. Wonderful infrastructure of roads, dams, lakes, set in 360 ac private undulating forest. Secluded 1 ac block, f/hold (11 in total) with eleventh share in whole acreage. Power & ph to block. Ten families already installed. \$72,500. Ph: 03-9329-7676 or 5473-2245.

INGLEWOOD, TWENTY UNDEVELOPING ACRES, fenced, grazing, cultivation, mg dam, 5 km sealed rd, prosperous town, shed, unfinished weekender, \$25,000. Ph: 03-5438-3436.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND, magnif private 42 ac, unspoilt forest & excel pasture land. Stunning views, fully fenced (new), power, 3 b/r, 9 year old, 16 sq house, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, family, lounge. Ample water, beaches & nat pks nearby. \$165,000. Ph: 03-5194-2313 after 5.00 pm.

AFFORDABLE COUNTRY LIVING near major town, fishing, snowfields. Quaint cedar cottage, open plan, 3 b/r, 2 bathrooms, verandahs front/rear overlooking undulating hills, 2 car garage. Peaceful & pretty, ideal self-suff. Follow your dreams. \$125,000. Ph/fax: 03-5153-1886 BH.

TASMANIA

SHEFFIELD/RURAL, 2 b/r well maintained sunny cottage, 1 ac, great mtn views, furnished (opt), consider long-term rental. \$60,000. Ph: 07-5424-2284.

MARRAWAH, 140 ac uncleared eucalyptus/heath, under conservation covenant, with development potential (tourism/hobby farm), perm water, 2 crks, open plan house with alternative power, ph. Solitude, fishing, surfing, bushwalking. \$120,000 ONO. Ph: Diana, 03-6257-0115.

KING ISLAND: Idyllic hobby farm, secluded position, river frontage, manfens, etc, 17 km from Currie township. Three b/r home, with sun-room, gas & elec connected. Large garage/workshop. Established vegetable garden/orchard. Well fenced, 2 dams, pump to river. \$100,000 ONO. Ph: Elaine Hindmarsh, 03-6461-1234.

NEAR DERBY, NE Tas: Magnificent valley views, comfortable 3 b/r home on 11 ac, some thick forest, some pasture. Phone, elec, HWS & stove, s/c/heater, workshop, double garage, estab vegie garden. River & rd frontage, 2 perm crks. \$68,000. Ph: Ian, 03-6353-2483.

TASMANIA – TAMAR VALLEY (20 mins Launceston): Peaceful retreat with stunning river views from this 3 b/r older style home with power & town water (celery top pine kitchen, new wood-heater & o/fireplace), on 1 ac undulating land, native trees, f/trees & herb garden. Ph: mobile, 0416-018-485, or adbell@bigpond.com

'RIVERVIEW', 4 b/r house on the banks of the Tyenna River, 40 mins to Hobart, close to Mt Field Nat Pk and Lake Pedder. The house has approx 1½ ac & has 2 titles. Close to local shop, PO & school. Fish or just enjoy the view. \$59,500. Ph: 03-6288-1411.

WEETAH, TWENTY ACRES (7 km Deloraine), ½ bush, ½ pasture, 2 – 3 b/r home, perm water, vegie garden, fruit, berries. Suit self-suff with potential income. \$115,000. Ph: 03-6362-3510.

NORTHERN TASMANIA, 3 b/r w/b house & lge intensive organic vegie garden. Northern aspect. Remainder chemical free (3 yrs) pasture. Rich red soil & spring water. \$120,000 for house & 28 ac or \$160,000 house & 45 ac. Ph/fax: 03-6425-7359.

COMMUNITIES/SHARES

MID NORTH COAST NSW, 2½ share in 380 interesting ac, 28 km to Kempsey, r/forest 2WD access, exclusive use 60 private ac approx. Backs state forest, 11 x 9 m shack on concrete, ph, tank, etc. \$29,000 ONO. Also 2½ share perm crk frontage, exclusive use 60 private ac approx. \$20,000 ONO. Magical place. Ph: 02-6566-9028. 0419-611-460. \$43,000 ONO for both.

FIFTEEN MINUTES WAUCHOPE, ½ share on 600 ac bushland, swimming hole, crk, school bus, 2 b/r cabin, power, ph. \$55,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6587-5172.

*Don't forget the deadline
if wishing to advertise in
Grass Roots*

GRASSIFIEDS

BUSINESS FOR SALE

DRAKE GENERAL STORE, beautiful nth NSW. All plant & equip in good condition. Flat attached. \$70,000 + SAV. Ph: owner, 02-6737-6617, AH 02-6737-6622.

FOR RENT/ CARETAKER WANTED

QUEENSLAND: HOUSE on 106 ac, 38 km Bundaberg, bordering fauna reserve/state forest. Secluded, dirt rd, tank water, solar HW, no elec. \$60/week, bond, preferably long term. Ph: 07-4159-9539. Steck, MS 541, BUNDABERG 4670.

MUD BRICK FAMILY HOUSE, 3 b/r, 12V solar. Lovely position, river & hills, school bus. Wyndham, SE NSW. Long-term lease. \$85 week. Need to be community minded & caring. No cats. Bond, references required. Contact 03-5883-2408, 02-6494-1878.

UPPER LANSLOWNE, 30 mins Taree, NSW, 3 - 4 b/r comfortable mudbrick house on friendly MO property. Beauty & peace. Ph: Kathy, 02-6551-2240.

RETIRED COUPLE, cheap rent, \$20 week, long term, 27 ft c/van, en suite, in exchange caretaker duties 1 hr daily. Thirty km west Millmerran, 250 km west Brisbane. Ph: Mick, 07-4695-4104.

PERSON(S) TO SHARE/RENT house, c/van, peaceful Hunter bush block, 60 km Newcastle. Terms negotiable. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

CARETAKING, SYDNEY BUT RURAL, suit individual(s) or couple with young children. Must be gardener. Alternative lifestyle site. Trainer, 0407-011-149.

WANTED TO RENT/ CARETAKE

PREFERABLY PERMANENT bush place wanted to rent and love, mid-north coast. Ph: Iris, 02-6682-2906.

EXCHANGE

EXCHANGE, well equipped go-anywhere prof built steel sailing boat value \$60,000, for land or house & land Sth Aus/Tas/Vic. Ph: 08-8283-2958.

PROPERTY WANTED

APPROXIMATELY FIVE ACRES, river frontage, land & ocean access from block, utilities unimportant, between Maryborough & Townsville, northerly aspect. Inspecting March 2000, cash avail now for suitable block. Reply to: K Barber, PO Box 597, MUSWELLBROOK 2333.

CANBERRA: LAND OR HOUSE AND LAND, 40 ac +. Affordable, within 45 mins city: Kellie 0419-020-814, 02-6259-7474.

*Please print your ad clearly
so we can do likewise*

PLACING AN AD?
See page 74 for details

OPPORTUNITIES

WANTED, TWENTY-NINE PEOPLE to get paid \$\$\$ to lose up to 15 kg. Ph: 03-9726-5860.

SINGLE, MIDDLE-AGE FEMALE seeks other females interested in developing organic farming, view to self-suff, on 42 ha farm tropical Qld. Rent, or buy shares, arrangements. Plenty of quality bore water. Must like animals & peaceful living. Ph: Monica, 04-2720-0402 evenings or weekends.

ACTIVE, RETIRED COUPLE, unique lifestyle, accom, expenses provided for running Waterbird Haven, LAUNCESTON Tasmania. Ph: 03-6394-4087. Come, stay few days free.

RELAXED FEMALE TO SHARE lge home. Pool, a/c, lge dog. LESMURDIE, WA. Ph: 08-9291-0576, ask for Melissa.

CARETAKER, SELF-SUFFICIENCY FARM, free room/board, n/s, share in income ventures (no outlays). Work avail on local farms. For family 28 ft c/van, cheap rent. Contact: Danny, PO Box 95, BALLANDEAN, Qld. 4382. Email: danny@halenet.com.au

PROPERTY DEVELOPER/LIFE-PARTNER required to share in development of & returns from bird sanctuary/commercial breeding aviaries & horse riding facilities on 50 ac of mountain r/forest, inland from Mackay Qld. Successful applicant will be female, 18-30s, fit & active, self-motivated, have keen interest in animals & nature, and be looking for a long-term project with worthwhile rewards. Apply with resume of experience, interests & photo to: Bruce Kennedy, Lot 11, Chelmans Road, DALRYMPLE HEIGHTS, Qld 4757.

LIVE RENT-FREE in house (Gin Gin SE Qld, 25 ac) for exchange of farming activities. Want more info? Please send experiences & qualifications to: Mr H Oldfield, C/- Warriewood Delivery Centre, WARRIEWOOD BEACH, NSW 2102.

PUBLICATIONS

HOME EDUCATION for info send SSAE to: Alternative Education Resource Group, PO Box 71, CHIRNSIDE PARK 3116.

'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES' for profit or pleasure - how to get started, pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

DOLLARS FOR WORDS, start making \$\$\$ from writing. Practical, encouraging manual, over 40 pp, A4. Send \$15 to: J McCrohan, C/- Post Office, INGLEWOOD 3517.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES on almost every subject, also fiction titles. Preloved and new. Monthly catalogue avail or visit our website at www.bookmania.com.au Bookmania, Box 496E, MORISSET 2264. Ph: 02-4970-5694.

'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE', is a co-operatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 editions for \$18, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480.

BOOKS, NEW AND OLD. Australiana, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH', the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian Societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores and natural therapies practitioners, listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 02-4721-5068.

STEINER HOME SCHOOLING? A teaching manual by Alan Whitehead on Creativity and Curriculum. Send \$12 to: Golden Beetle Books, Box 33 BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483. Ph: 02-6680-3889, fax: 02-6680-4314. Visa/Mastercard. www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/

HANDCRAFTS

BEADS! BEADS! BEADS! Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 129, WALPOLE 6398.

CROSS STITCH, original Australian designs, patterns & kits. Send 4 x 25 cent stamps for colour catalogue. L Crawford, PO Box 11, ROSEDALE Qld 4674. Ph: 07-4156-5178. Website: <http://members.optusnet.com.au/~leacrawford>

BUNDLES OF STRANDED COTTON available. Stranded cotton in bundles of 100* 8m skeins in 50 assorted colours. \$20 post free. Colours matched to dmc numbers. The Big Bundle of Stranded Cotton of 240 colours - \$50 post free. Send 45 cent stamp for free price list. Bankcard, Mastercard, Visa, money order, cheques. Arty & Crafty, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763. Fax: 08-8277-9402.

CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS: Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

NATURAL GEMSTONE JEWELLERY, pendants from \$7.50, necklaces from \$22. Send 3 x 45 c stamps for descriptions and prices to: C Hunter, 54 Maidstone St, RINGWOOD 3134.

FLOOR LOOM, Leclerc Artisan, 4 shaft, 6 pedal, 90 cm (36") weaving width, 2 reeds, many extras. \$300. Ph: 03-9459-5900.

GRASSIFIEDS

HEALTH & BEAUTY

ALCHEMY CONCEPTS, CANDLES, SOAPS & body products. Handmade using age old methods. Retail & wholesale. Ph/fax: 02-4982-8203. PO Box 70, MEDOWIE 2318.

ORGANICALLY GROWN TRADITIONAL herbal remedies for everyday conditions, arthritis, psoriasis etc. For catalogue please send SAE to: Tintagel Herbs, PO Box 27, CENTRAL TILBA, NSW 2546.

HANDMADE PURE VEGETABLE OIL SOAPS. These natural soaps are suitable for people who have sensitive or problem skin. For a product brochure send SAE to: Bushcraft Soaps, Lot 3 Counter Rd, M/S 591, GYMPIE 4570. Ph: 07-5486-7299.

COLLOIDAL SILVER GENERATORS. 9V pocket-sized with 99.99% pure silver rods as used by Dr Bob Beck, with a handbook. \$35 incl p&h. 27V Biphasic Zapper blood cleaning device as per Bob Beck specifications. \$145 incl p&h. Huldd Clark 9V Zappers. \$75 incl p&h. Enquiries and orders to: B Wilkinson, 14 Partridge St, TOOWOOMBA, Qld 4350. Ph/fax: 07-4638-9035.

NUMEROLOGY READINGS to discover your own special gifts, your soul's purpose & the timing of events. Understand your r/ships. Send full name at birth & birthdate for your chart and taped reading by experienced numerologist. \$45. Barbara Waters, Box 150, BANGALOW, 2479. Ph: 02-6687-1466, mobile 0414-272-898.

FOOD AND KITCHEN

HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS – mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

YOGHURT MAKERS, DECOR DAIRY. Cost \$28 incl Express Post within Australia. Send cheque/money order to: Novum Plastics, PO Box 192, FERNTREE GULLY, Vic 3156. Ph: 03-9752-5666, fax: 03-9752-6827.

BEE POLLEN, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10. 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. A & M Sciberras, PO Box 15, RAMCO 5322.

MISCELLANEOUS

SEPTIC TANKS – HOW TO BUILD or how to maintain one. Don't desludge! Treat the cause. Booklet \$20. HG Stephens, PO Box 18, EAST MELBOURNE 3002. Ph: 03-9510-3192.

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COURSES

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FUN-LOVING FEMALE, early 40s, divorced, 2 kids, n/s, n/d. I enjoy sitting by open fires, rain on the roof, movies, beach walking, travelling, puzzles & books & anything romantic. If you're looking for this type of r/ship, please contact: Sagittarian, GR 137, C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

GUY, THIRTY-NINE, smt town south NSW, into honesty, growing own food, sunrise, thunderstorms, open fires, wood stove cooking, making bread, ginger beer, jam, preserves, crafts, massage, much much more. Not into anger, manipulation, emotional blackmail etc. Seeking lady soul mate for peaceful fulfilling life together. Age open. Reply: Sunshine (GR 137), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

VEGETARIAN LADY, 43, 2 children European, slim, health-conscious, enjoys cooking, gardening, healing, astrology. Seeking a sensitive, caring & fun loving man for long-term r/ship. Reply: Anneke (GR137), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

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VICTORIA

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CONTENT GENT in his fifties, n/s, s/d, 5'9", 11 1/4 stone, living on 2 ac of tranquillity (not bush) in the Yarra Valley, would love to hear from a lady 40-50 yrs to share some time with. Tony, PO Box 229, WARBURTON 3799.

I AM A THIRTY YEAR OLD single Melbourne woman. I am a vegetarian because of my love for animals & some of my interests incl scuba diving, walking, reading, weekends away, natural therapies & yoga. I would like to correspond with vegetarian males who have similar interests. BJ, PO Box 1194, UPWEY 3158.

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Poetry

GOING BACK

*I've returned to trample over roads
Where my feet have gone before
And now my feet have taken me
To what was once my own front door.
Now do my eyes deceive me
Have those lovely trees all gone
No more tyre hangs from a rope
Which my children swung upon.
No more the rusty tin shed
Where I toiled each washing day
Or a propped up line here that held the clothes
So clean, so bright and gay.
The tears start rolling down my cheeks
As my thoughts go rushing back
To happy times in that little house
At the end of a dusty track.*

Mavis Munro

LONELINESS

*I walk on Sunday to the park wander around the swamp of
paperbark through picnicking families pretending I
belong.*

*A blue ball rolls in my path. I toss it back to the little fel-
low who laughs and squeals and runs it to his father.*

*I leave the family closeness block my ears to their calls
and return to my unit on floor five.*

Laurel Lamperd

WRINKLES

*I see you on sitting in your pyramid,
in years to come,
surrounded by the preserved husks
of melon and marrow;
They say the air is magic in there
that one can ward off
rheumatism, and depression,
coming out to face the world,
recharged, rejuvenated
if slightly dehydrated;
I will pass by your wrinkles,
and sit with you a spell.*

Alison Emerson



ROSE BUD

*Through the glass
a lone promise buds
on stark twiggy bush
The southern gale sighs
throws a wurley
and runs out of puff,
dispersing wintry rust
from thorny case
before it expires.*

*First born
struggles to bloom
loathing to shed
snug coat of green
safe and dry
on this chilly day
in mid July.*

*Sharpened slithers of gold
pierce the grey
and slice through the prismatic bow
which arches over the green
revealing a crimson clue
to tip brittle limb.*

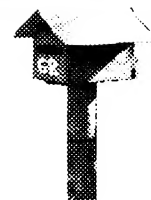
*On the last day of August
full term
a flame bursts.*

Valerie M Alexander

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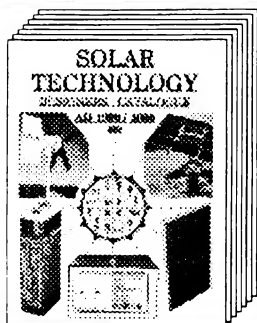
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